THE FUNNY MAG

KRISHNA Thulabaram

IN TELUGU

BY
STHANAM NARASIMHA RAO
AND HIS TROUPE.

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S. BRAHMA

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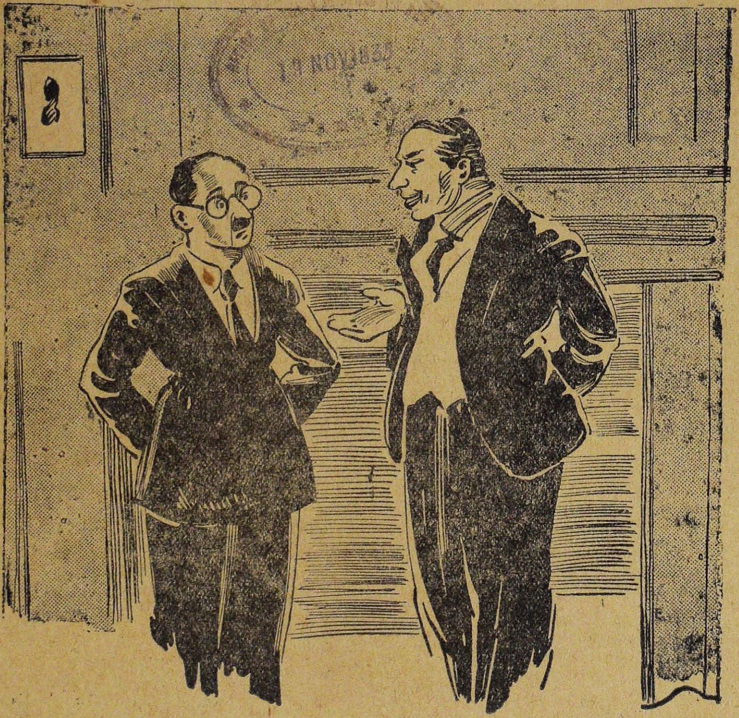


1st MAN :—My wife comes out of a large family.

2nd MAN :—You're lucky, mine own brought a family with her.

196757

"I give every pie to my wife" says a reader.
We guess he keeps silver and gold

***

"An author must have imagination."
In the first place he must imagine that someone is going to read it.

***

"A rash motor driver ran into a restaurant the other day" writes a contributor.
Got it hot and strong!

***

"I am now attached to the police force" prides an young man.
Hand cuffed!

***

"Everyone should dress to suit his purse" says an eminent person.
But nudism is not allowed.

***

"There is always a tie between father and son" states a writer.
And the son is generally wearing it.

***

A fakir recently sat for twenty one days without moving
The only amusement of that sort we have is chess.

***

After serving ten years of a life-sentence a New York song-writer was set free.
We hope he is thoroughly cured.

***

Housewives complain that burglars cleared the larders of jams and pickles.
Poaching on their preserves.

"It is easy to make money at home."
How about its circulation!

***

Many an ordinary man has a wonderful imagination!
For instance, he thinks he is the head of the house.

***

"I have always taken things easily" confesses a reader.
And fortunately never caught.

***

One needs only plently of nerve to drive a car!
And petrol!

***

In the old days when a man wanted to kill an enemy he took his bow and arrows, sword, mace etc. and went out after him.

Nowadays he buys a motor car and does the same.

***

"I am a big gun at the office"
Well, don't get fired.

***

A model husband according to a western magazine is an honest one who tells the truth.

Yes and model wife is one who believes him.

***

A magician claims he can make ten-rupee notes disappear into thin air.

Ours do natarally.

"Don't attempt to snatch a bone from a dog's mouth" states a doctor.

Unless of course it happens to belong to one's leg.

***

"If you take plenty of walks in the rain you will not have a muddy complexion" says a beauty hint.

But the motorist who spalshed past us the other day didn't seem to be interested in our complexion.

***

"A scientist points out that the Sun is a great doctor."
The trouble is to get an appointment.

***

In Germany a double wedding was celebrated in an aeroplane.
And a parachute divoice in Hollywood.

***

"It isn't wrong" says a writer, "for a man to take a girl out and not to spend money on her."
Of course, but very difficult.

***

Perfect strangers sometimes divine things about our past.

Income tax inspector's for example.

***

A woman sued a chemist for being terribly secretive.
Always bottling up.

***

It is said that doctor's are bad at spelling.

Still their handwriting is generally of the kind that prevents any little deficiencies from being noticed.

***

"Very few men evince a keen interest in the beauties of their home" declares an architict.

Their wives keep a strict watch on them.

m2,N33FM

Plays and Players on Stage and Screen

William Powell is next to appear in "Black Chamber," a chills-and-fever mystery picture which actually lives up to its name. His leading lass is dark-eyed Rosalind Russell, the young lady M-G-M is grooming for star-

dom. Binnie Barnes, Lionel Atwill, Sterling Halloway, Walter King, Charles Grapewin, Cesar Romero, Sidney Bracy, and Charles Wilson all have important roles. William K. Howard is giving the orders. You'll always find William Powell at his best in a mystery picture.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's million dollar production of "A Tale of Two Cities" famous Dickens yarn, should pack picture palaces in all parts of the world. Director Jack Conway is out to make it an epic film. Ronald Colman, internationally popular, heads the gigantic cast. It should prove even a greater sensation than M-G-M's "David Copperfield."

Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan are finishing up "Tarzan Returns" under James McKay's precise direction. The script calls for its being every bit as exciting as previous Tarzan thrillers. Heading the huge supporting cast are Claire Dodd, William Henry and John Buckler. One of the authors of "Tarzan Returns," interestingly enough, is John Farrow, a boy-friend of Maureen O'Sullivan.

It may interest you to know how some of your favourites struggle to learn their lines. For instance Claudette Colbert paces the floor at night, and has to be absolutely alone. On the other hand, Gary Cooper usually reads his lines aloud to a friend for as long as the friend can take it. Katharine Hepburn lies flat on her stomach, but Bing Crosby sits back in an easy chair.

All of the music in the forthcoming Charlie chaplin comedy will be of the comedian's own composition.

This month's good news for the Silly Symphony fans is that Walt Disney is planning a full length Silly in Technicolour, which he hopes will reach the theatres before the year is out.

Ronald Colman however is getting the highest salary that United Artists have ever paid to a male star. It is £ 30,000 per picture and a share of the profits.

Charles Laughton has finished his long part in "Mutiny on the Bounty" in Hollywood and has arrived in England. Discussions with Alexander Korda about his part in "Cyrano" will follow immediately. "Cyrano" wil be directed by Alexander Korda with Lee Garmes as associate director.

Clark Gable's next picture will be "San Francisco," with Jeanette MacDonald as his leading lady.

Maurice Chevalier is to make a new version of "The Beloved Vagabond" for Toeplitz Productions of England. The picture will go into production early in December, when Maurice has completed his present engagement to appear on the Paris stage.

FILMS TO SEE

PARAGON

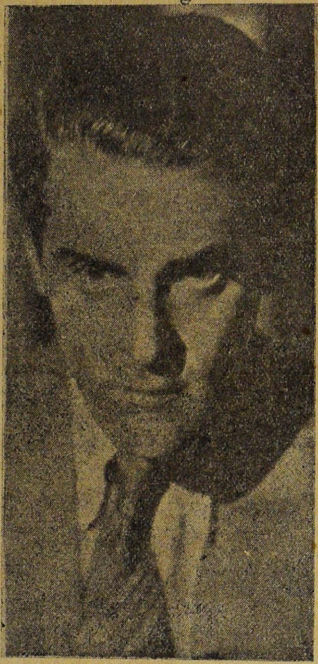
"Folies Bergere."

(*20th Century*)

Directed by :—Roy Del Ruth.

Chief Actors : — Maurice Chevalier, Ann Sothern, Merle Oberon, Eric Blore and Ferdinand Munier.

Chevalier is back again in his form in this gorgeous musical production playing the dual role of a Baron and a music-hall performer. He sings five songs in his inimitable Maurice manner and acts beautifully enough to make this picture worth visiting. The story of the film is as slight as possible and though there is some colour—the colour of the story has a general tendency to turn



cold. As the baroness, Merle Oberon, the delightful English star, though she looks fascinating, is a sad miscast.

Both the roles of the Baron and Charlie are played by Maurice who gives a performance highly entertaining but at the same time differently so, in the dual impersonation. Ann Sothern, as Mimi, the entertainer's sweet-heart shows unexpected fire, while Merle Oberon is perfectly groomed to give life to the beautiful Baroness. The picture begins and ends with spectacular song and dance numbers. The most gorgeous, however is the straw hat number where Chevalier pleases his admirers "Singing A Happy Song."

WELLINGTON

"Les Miserables."

(*20th Century.*)

Directed by:—Richard Boleslawski from the Victor Hugo story.

Chief Actors :—Fredric March, Charles Laughton, Cedric Hardwicke, Rochelle Hudson, Frances Drake and John Beal.

Fredric March as Valjean does a sound work. Laughton as the stern Javert is always inclined to overdo his part. Rochelle Hudson is charming as Cosette when grown up and Marilynne Knowlden is very good as the Cosette as a child; John Beal turns out a stern American as he endeavours to play Cosette's lover. Sir Cedric Hardwicke strikes rather a negative note as the Bishop.

A FUNNY DUEL

By P. GOVINDA RAO.

WITH due apologies to my readers who know much of geography, I would venture to say that there are two towns 'Chitoor' by name in India. The duel that I am going to describe took place not in the Chitoor that is in Rajputana but in the one near Madras. It is a small town and in it runs the holy waters of the Sacred river 'Panakini.'

The cause of the duel was, as is generally usual, a beautiful lady who had experienced seventeen long summers living in a mansion on the banks of the river. The handsome girl was the only daughter of a rich chetty. She was a diamond among her race. To put it in the words of her father "she was the Queen of beauty at that place." The father of the girl who was a lover of western habits and customs, had an idea of westernizing her and so sent her to a convent school near by. She studied there up to the school final-class and when she came to be of marriageable age, her father, as was customary in their religion, asked her to put a stop to her education. Vimala (it was the name by which the people in the house called her), although she had imbibed certain of the western habits and character, did not have the audacity of going against the wishes of her good father. So, much against her will, she did not pursue her college course, but remained at home and improved her talents with the aid of a lady private tutor, whom her father engaged for her.

GRAND and elaborate preparations were made by Madhu's father for sending him for higher studies to Chitoor. Madhu was a fair young man of nineteen who had just passed his middle school examination after half-a-dozen unsuccessful attempts at the same. Even in the seventh attempt his name did not appear in the regular list of eligibles as people might have expected, but under the second list or as what people now call the moderation list. As there was no railway station to the village in which he lived, he had to travel to the nearest railway station in a bullock cart. A large number of friends and relatives attended his departure and gave him a hearty send-off.

Madhu produced his transfer certificate to the Head-master of the Board High School, Chitoor, whose looks made him understand that he had some misgivings about his character, and got himself admitted in the Telugu section of the fourth form. The boy, excuse me, the young man, was regularly irregular in attending the classes. The first terminal examinations were over. Nothing elaborate need be said about Madhu's result in the exam. I hope my readers would be able to judge it for themselves from his previous reports in the middle school classes.

The Dasara holidays commenced. On the first day of his vacation Madhu decided to cease all work and desired to go out on an evening ramble neatly dressed. It was five o'clock in the evening There were huge dark clouds overhanging the sky. Madhu full well knew from his knowledge of the study of natural science, that there would be a heavy downpour of rain. In spite of this he decided to go out for the walk.

There is only one good highway in Chitoor fit for taking a walk, and it was the one in which Vimala's bungalow was situated. All the gentlemen of the town used to have their stroll only on that road. Due to the inclemency of the weather there was nobody in the street on that particular day. It was pitch dark and Madhu went strolling along like a thief. His figure was seen at intervals when there was a flash of lightning. When he neared Vimala's house, it began to rain heavily and so he rushed into her house for shelter against the rain. Before he could recover from the after-effects of the attempts for shelter, Vimala rushed out to see who the polished young man was that had come to her house in such disturbing weather. On seeing Madhu, she asked him in polite terms as to who he was and what he wanted. Madhu, as soon as he saw her was crazily enamoured of her beauty and decided to marry her. This was purely an affair of love at first sight. These thoughts of love and marriage overpowered him and he forgot to observe the simple rules of etiquette of answering a lady who had put him a few questions. But at last he narrated to her in brief the circumstances under which he was caught in the rain and told her that he had come there for shelter. He further asked her to give him a cup of water as he was very thirsty. The girl went in and emerged out with a tray in which were kept a few biscuits and a glass of coffee. She offered it to Madhu as a sort of a light refreshment. Madhu did justice to them with good appetite and by this time the rain stopped. He thanked her profusely for the refuge and kind treatment afforded to him by her and returned to his room without even finishing his walk.

Kittu, the chum of Madhu, was a domicile of Chitoor, was a Chetty by caste. He was the only son of a retired circle inspector drawing a fairly decent pension. Kittu's father was pretty old and so desired to see his only son weded before he died. He was searching for a bride in the same town who was in social rank and financial status an equal to his son. Even when Kittu was a young boy, he had seen Vimala going in a rick to the con-

vent and had a special attraction to her. To sum up his whole intentions in short, he did not like to marry any other girl except Vimala. So he expressed his intentions to his father, From that time onward Kittu's father tried every means in his power to effect the marriage.

Madhu, after his evening adventure on the rainy day, had no peace of mind. He came home and lay restless on his bed revolving over the episode of the evening. Just then Kittu entered his room as usual and, seeing his friend in a state of unusual unrest, asked him as to what the cause of it was Madhu most unwillingly and after much pressure from Kittu, revealed to him in a low tone all that took place during his walk that evening and begged of him to assist him in securing the hand of that Chetty girl,

Kittu was at first shocked to hear that his friend had fallen in love with his prospective wife. But checking his emotion, coolly told him that he was going to be wedded to her after a couple of months. He also explained to him in detail how the marriage alliance was a long-contemplated ones At first Madhu thought that his friend was cutting a joke at his expense and rebuked him gently by telling that it was not the time for him to make fun of him when he was meaning a thing seriously. But afterwards when he came to know that all that Kittu said was fact, he became enraged and threatened him to leave all hopes of her, Then a heated argument took place between the two and from words it came to blows. The noise produced by the clash of hands was heard by a common friend of both and he stepped into the room in haste to see what was amiss. When everything was made known to him, he accepted to act as an umpire and judge as to who should have the girl. He decided that they hould fight each other in a duel in so-called 'Godha' of the town the next morning at eight and he volunteered to act as the referee. He further said that whoever won the duel had a right to marry Vimala.

Madhu was a coward. He had not even seen a duel being fought. At the very thought of it his nerves failed him He was now between the devil and the deep sea. He wanted to marry Vimala. He was afraid to fight a duel. So atlast he decided to leave Chitoor by a train which left the place at four early in the morning without being noticed by anybody,

Kittu was phisically very weak. He feared that his stout friend, and now his opponent, would easily eclipse him when it came to a question of duel. He preferred running away from the place before dawn without being found out. Than to fight a duel and ignominiously get beaten by Madhu and thus lose Vimala. So, he also determined to leave Chitoor by the four-o'clock train.

The umpire was a very poor judge, He did not know the finer points of the game as well as the fundamentals. So he repented for having accepted to act as a judge. So he thought that under those circumstances it was better that he escaped from that place without anybody knowing it, So this was the third unlucky concerned in the duel who chose the unhappy morning train.

Meanwhile preparations were being made in Vimala's house on an extensive scale for her marriage, She was to be married to an England returned civilian who was at Madras, The marriage was to be celebrated at Madras. Vimala's father sent for the family priest to fix up the best Muhoortham time for the departure of the marriage party and according to his instigation they had to leave Chitoor by the train which left the place early in the morning.

Madhu, Kittu and the umpire met at the station with their bag and baggage as if by an accident. Now all the three were at their wits' end, Each had to be ashamed of his action, When they were in such state of affairs they saw Vimala on the railway platform and came to know that she was engaged to an England returned civilian at Madras and that the marriage was to take place the next day. Now, they were fully ashamed at their stupidity and returned home as friends Exactly at four the train puffed off, Alas, Madhu and Kittu had come to the station to give a send off to their beloved on the eve of her marriage with a man far away at Madras.

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BLAZING TROUBLES

By K. KRISHNAN NAIR

THROUGH long vistas of benches and desks where seedy looking fellows toiled away at 60 M. P. H., and office rooms crowded with contributors with grievances, I passed into the room of the Editor of "The Cookery Journal." The bloke was taking a nap and was muttering in his sleep "your article is rotten, your, M.S. is rotten." I unscrewed my Parker and let a steady stream of violet Swan ink play upon his nasal organ. That woke him. He jumped up two inches in air howling "murder." After a strenuous attempt I made him desist from this exercise of his vocal chords and he calmed down after letting off some epithets which would make a jutkawallah I know blush.

Being a hater of this beating about the bush, I at once commenced my business. "Eddie (we called him Eddie tho' his name was Rajan for you see he was the editor of the Cookery Journal) you look fine to-day. Why, the other day Edwin came up to me and asked if Ramon Novarro was in India? I told him no. Then he asked me who it was that he saw with me in front of the Mental Hospital. Then I told him it was you. But he went away unconvinced." This raised the old boy a foot high. "By the way, Eddie will you lend me your maroon blazer for this evening?" The old boy hesitated. Then he thought of the fact that people should help people who think people to be as handsome as possible like Novarros and so gave up the blazer without protest.

I donned the blazer and as pleased as Punch made for the Tug of War Club. You see it was the anniversary of the Tug o' War Club, in memorial of the day on which the founder of this institution tugged with Huien Tsang, who was on a visit to India to inspect the condition of the Indian Pubs of that day.

It was a gala day, that. We had a nice dinner. Though the meat tasted like chopped tyre made wet, we didn't mind. After the dinner Sukesh got up and lectured on "Evolution and Tug of War." He said that as in prehistoric times tugging was not prevalent we were surely on a higher rung of the ladder of evolution. He finished his lecture amidst loud applause Then I got up and spoke about Elizabethan Stage and Tug o' War The president's invocation to God to put into the people's head the fact that tugging for an hour or so was as much necessary as dining was heart-stirring and some of the audience were moved to tears. The day would have been alright. But towards the end of the proceedings the clouds took it up into their silly heads to pelt us with rain, each drop large enough to fill an empty Johnny Walker bottle. Towards 7 o'clock there was a lull in the rain. But when I was half way on the roads, the rain again set in torrents. As I did not wish to spoil Eddie's blazer I began to run. The rain deluged my 7·5 power specs. with enough water to drown the whole editorial staff. The light was poor. I was thus proceeding rather inelegantly when I ran into a guy. I apologised profusely. But the feller muttered something about pushing somebody's head down their (somebody's) throats. At this I took offence and asked, "Who the hell are you?" "I am Eddie," the stranger thundered. Well I did not wait there to hear the rest. While common courtesy demands that you should not barge into anybody's tummy at an angle of 45° the action becomes more demoralising if the feller on whose tiffin-carrier you have commenced pugilistic demonstrations, has in any way obliged you. And if giving you a blazer for the evening is not as much an obligation as not landing an underhand left on your solar plexus, I want to know what is.

So what I did was to take my wet blazer and to throw it upon Eddie and run away for life. More of my adventures that night would not interest anybody except that I entered the asylum (the specs being rather obscured by H 2 O) thinking that it was a haven where ye could get the stuff that cheereth man and God, and was detained on suspicion. So that when I reached home a belligerent clock pointed to 10.30.

On my desk was a letter. I opened it and read:—

" My dear friend,

When you knocked into me at 7-30 to-day you sort of went mad and presented me with a blazer—which suits me—thank you—and made off. I cannot understand why you should take such a sudden aversion to my name, Anyhow I am going to Madras by the 8-30 train and will be back only in March.

Your own,
Edwin Campbell."

Gorn! The bloke I mistook for Eddie was Edwin and the old pirate was already on his way to Madras with the blazer. Thinking deeply on the situation, I decided that the best thing to do under the circumstances was to faint and so I fainted down right.

When I opened my peepers (note the artful alliteration) an apparition confronted me. It was Eddie and he was in a hurry "wake up" sonny said he "and give me a blazer. I have an engagement with my gal to-day." Well here was a crisis. I jumped up and lubricating my cramped limbs with some castrol, knelt down several

times and craved his forgiveness. Eddie was rather mystified at first. But when I began to throw light on the whole situation the mystified look sort of rolled off his face.

He went to the sideboard and took a good drink to steady his shattered nerves. At length he found his voice "you worm.........do you mean to tell me that you have given my blazer to that bally Edwin what called me a dyspeptic crab' cos I would not publish his rotten article. "Do you like brinjals?" "Oh God! he will ill-treat by blazer." His affection for his blazer was so great that the visions, imagination conjured up of Edwin ill-treating his blazer tugged at his heart strings. But for forgetting the whole thing Ed. was not the man. "Look here sonny" said he (he didn't exactly say sonny but that is another matter). You have ordered for a blazer at Mahomed Shaws Firm. You Gimme a letter to Shaw to hand over the blazer to me." Then I told him my constitution was not what it was, and not to give me shocks. But the blighter was adamant. I pretended to faint when the bounder began to unscrew his Parker pen. The cheek of it. Here he was infringing upon my Patent. But there was no other go. I jumped up and howled that I would see him canoeing in styx first before he got anything from me. He said "I am going to get your cricket bat and if by the time I come back you have not finished that letter I will finish you."

When Eddie came back I gave a closed envelope to him, with many misgivings. Then he told me that I was his best friend in the world and that he would knock my teeth out if I ever breathed of these events to anybody. With these words he went away.

Though the events which succeeded were not witnessed by me, I have tangible proofs of their occurrence and am in a position to guarantee their authenticity. Readers, who are of opinion that during my life time I have said enough fibs to get me a passport to hell and so I would not scruple to tell a few more, Beware!

The editor reached home and rang for the butler. When that grave factotum arrived he told him to order the chauffeur to bring the car round. The butler went away and came back with the news that the chauffeur had gone to the town, him having an appointment with the butcher's girl there. This incensed Eddie, but like the masterful man he was, he suppressed his anger, asked the butler coldly to go to hell and donning his hat inside out, started for the Tailoring Firm.

A placard with the figure of a tramp on one side and a gent on the other politely informed the customer of the metamorphasis one could undergo, in the firm for so much rupees. That the tramp looked like Eddie's second cousin, was not the fault of the artist but of the Divine Creator. But it enraged him not the less. Altogether when he was conducted before Mahomed Shaw he was in a nice mood.—I don't think.

Mahomed Shaw was a very voluminous gent and looked as if he could have won the world heavy weight championship if he had cared. He had a habit of repeating every remark twice. Now noticing the visitor he said affably 'Sir, your hat is worn inside out.' Yes inside out." This was the last straw. That anybody could have the presumption to tell him he didn't know the inside of a hat from the outside! He fumed and muttered that he had killed greater men for less than this. But Shaw thought that it was a joke and being a very sensible man and knowing that customers who crack wits expect their hearers to laugh, grin and chuckle, laughed grinned and chuckled. All this coupled with the fact that three times round Shaw was half a mile—and Eddie was a man who hated obesity even in his grandpa—alienated the sympathy of Eddie who began to think that Shaw's existence in this world was a superfluity. So proceeding business-like he took out the letter and handed it to Shaw who extended a half a ton arm to receive it. Shaw opened it and read :—

" My darling,

Each moment of our separation seems to me like eternity. The only thing that sustains me is the cherished memory of your face, and the hope of seeing you again. Think of me in your dreams, dear.

' Emperor of China."

Though in his sartorial profession Shaw did not often exercise his cranial contents (might be due to their vacuity) he now began to test their executive powers. He had even at the beginning thought that there was something fishy about the stranger. No sane man wears his hat inside out and no sane man ever tries to brighten the conversation by talking about murder. And least of all the bloke brings a billet doux from the Emperor of China.

Naturally of an appolectic constitution, Shaw was now on the point of explosion. Visions of newspaper headlines "Escaped Lunatic Kills a Prosperous Commercial Gent," rose before his horror-stricken eyes. His eyes popped out and he let out some blood curdling yells : " Murder, Murder. Help Oh Help! " Some half a dozen assistants ran in and having mastered our frantic hero, who had commenced pugnacious demonstrations at this unexpected turn of events, waited for further injunctions from their scared master. Shaw soon regained his normality and explained that Eddie was a lunatic and that homicidal too, and for further evidence showed them the letter. "I say, look here! You can't do this thing, what?" was the comment of an assistant upon the situation. The remarks of another rabbit-faced young man was more coherent. "Murder him," advised that sage with commendable equanimity for one who had such ferocious traits in his temperament.

Later events of how Eddie managed to escape from the vile clutches of Shaw and company are shrouded in mystery. But it is authentically reported that it was an unpleasant day for Mahomed Shaw's tummy as it had to stand the brunt (literally) of Eddie's wrath.

Eddie returned to his lodgings secretly nursing murderous sentiments against poor me. He took a good glass of old scotch to steady his nerves (for murdering needs cool thinking) and started for my house to reek an awful vengeance.

The reader may be interested to know what steps I took to ward off this awful calamity that was slowly but surely setting upon me.

Directly the Ed. had gone with the billet-doux, I thought over the whole situation for half an hour, took a couple of stiff drinks and thought for half an hour more. Then I took a tape and measured my biceps. Then I swallowed a bottle of Cod liver oil whole-sale & once again measured my muscles. Nothing doing. And bearing in mind the fact that before he took up editing Ed. was a pugilist who went about doing odd jobs for people who wanted to see their ma-in-laws, pa-in-laws and editors secure in their respective coffins, you can understand more clearly the seriousness of the situation. So the only thing left

was to develop the will. Nothing like the will, old blokes, nothing like the power of the mind.

So I put on my coat and made for a joint on the opposite side of the street. In front of a small office was a board.

Mr. Wosper Billet,
Mind Trainer.
Train your will power.

On entering I saw a man with the cob-webs,—I mean whiskers all over his face. He was singing Andi Pandaram in quite a mournful voice. On seeing me he said energetically, "Dear Sir, at this time of the year I am not giving my autographs," in tones which suggested that though he sort of liked my face he regretted the inability to furnish me with my request. "Not harf" said I vulgarly, "Don't want your bally autograph. I am a client." The man's manner changed suddenly. "I say, sit down" said he. And when I was going to take the solitary chair in the rooms he warned, "Mind you that chair has only three legs. You sit on this W. P. B. !"

"Want a cigarette?" asked the gent 'Yes,' said I like a shot. "So do I" said the man as he took a vile looking cigarette from his pocket and handed it to me The thing was of the non-combustible variety. I tried to light it but gave up the attempt in disgust and threw it away. Noticing this the man said, " You have no will power. If you had, you would have lighted the cigarette even at the risk of burning this whole office down. Why, a client of mine whose name I cannot divulge asked his wife to go to hell after taking a few courses in this office."

Then he taught me how to train the will. By jove, it was as simple as walking on your head and I mastered the whole thing in an hour. Then he told me the fees was 15 rupees 2 annas, the two annas being the cost of the cigarette I looked at the typed lessons to make sure, then fixed a gaze on him (lesson 3. To tackle refractory money (grabbers) and saying, "Don't be silly "walked out. On the way back I insured myself at a firm. For you see if my precautionary measures become amiss my family will not starve.........

Back again in my study, with a glass of old Scotch by my side I once again pored over the type-written sheets. I had perfectly mastered them when the cyclone arrived.

The Ed. knocked open the door unceremoniously and entering took off his coat and rolled up his sleeves. But my gaze arrested him. I had contracted my eyebrows till they met in a bushy jungle in the centre, my eyes were narrowed down to slits and my baleful gaze was fixed upon him, unwaveringly. (Lesson 4, tackling pugnacious Editors). I could see him cringing and cowering. I said " Don't be silly. Forget that I ever borrowed your blazer. Forget that you wanted to murder me." Here the tearful Eddie interrupted. " I didn't want to murder you. I only wanted to bash your face into a tomato." I continued austerly, "Forget that you ever wanted to bash my face into a tomato." Then I added in a more kindly vein, " Now like a good boy come here, give me a nice kiss and go." "Not now," cried poor Eddie and departed tearfully.

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CUT HERE

Group 1 *Number 1*

No.	Incomplete word.	Solution
1	— ANGS	
2	— I — ING	
3	—ELL	
4	— OKE	
5	— AINS	
6	— AUNT	
7	— OT	

Complete with a letter in place of each dash to get the meaning as per clues below.

USE BLOCK LETTERS

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REMAINING 20% FOR

(3) **Consolation prizes.** Entries as received will be numbered, some of the entry forms we shall select and purchase, the lower number at the highest price and so on. **Therefore, post your entry as early as possible.**

and (4) **Special prize on completion of this series of 6 puzzles.**

(*a*) To selected competitors who have regularly entered and failed to win.

(*b*) To those who have submitted the largest number of entries and not won prizes.

CLUES.

1. A rope's lay
2. Four or six in the heather
3. Hide here,
4. One race needs this,
5. I do hope you take these,
6. Tall,
7. No! Oh! No! It is rot, wait till you see the result.

RULES.

1. The entrance fee is Re. 1 per entry, to be remitted by Money Order or Indian Postal Orders. Post Office receipts (not acknowledgments) for the former to be attached to the solutions, enclose Postal Orders with your entries and retain the counterfoil. British Postal Orders of equivalent value also accepted.

2. *Skill wins.* Alternatives have, as far as possible, been eliminated. Competitors may, however, send in as many solutions as they wish, paying accordingly as per Rule 1.

3. Every coupon submitted may qualify for any prize, a share or shares thereof, for instance two coupons give you two opportunities and so on.

4. Prizes may vary and the decision of the management is final and binding under all circumstances, this being an express condition of entry.

5. Correspondence cannot be entered into or interviews granted.

6. Entries for two puzzles closing simultaneously may be sent together and the fees covered by one remittance.

7. The key solutions for this puzzle and Apex Crossword, Group 1. Number 1, will be published in the 'Apex' Bulletin soon after the closing date. The cost of the Bulletin (post free) is annas two only, competitors requiring a copy should remit such cost along with and additional to their entrance fees.

8. If more entrance forms are required for yourself and friends they may (time permitting) be had on application, otherwise additional entries should be made on plain paper, filled in with ink (in block letters) or typed.

Address all entries and fees to :— **APEX BUREAU,**

11, Quadrant Square, Bangalore.

CLOSING DATE, 15—11—1935.

OTHERWISE ENGAGED

By SARS.

DEAR things are rarer to get. True it is that the Dasra Holidays come periodically every year. But the pity is that one, especially of the type of Bhanu, feels it too long a period for him to wait before he gets the next Dasra. His eagerness rises on limitlessly as he approaches more and more the long-wished-for holidays. I fear that any reader who happens to be a mathematician will be thoroughly disappointed if he will try to represent graphically the relation between the eagerness and the time to wait for. The curve becomes very steep, and rises on by leaps and bounds. Just a day before the actual commencement of the holidays the eagerness is, if I can be a little more mathematical, at the "plus-infinity."

INDEED who ever can be so unworldly to dislike such holidays, unrivalled for the merriment they offer? The old and the young, the poor and the rich, the gay and the sober, are all found involved in great jollity. Times there are during this period when they forget themselves and quite against their own moods and temperaments they partake alike actively in the revels of the period. One is indeed blessed so as to be free from any want of any specimen of mankind during these holidays. The prospective love-lorn youths, on the one hand, hastening aimlessly amidst the thick crowds that is to be found in the streets during the Dasra evenings, and passing on from one place to another all the while looking all-round in vain for a particular face amidst a thousand faces, and "forlorn hopes," on the other hand, creeping all their way with absent minds and desperate air, well displayed by their ill-regulated paces, thrust-out lips, sunken eyes and concave cheeks with many a ripple on them, are not an uncommon sight to see, during these celebrated holidays. The young folk of the fairer sex, all dressed up in their own curious fashions like dainty dolls for show, steal now and then some short looks from between their strong escorts of friends and relatives, and send some fair speechless messages to the lords of their hearts, who, though steeped in utter fear of being discovered in the situation by somebody else, try to put on a very bold countenance, and in their great wish to appear at their best to the eyes of their beloved sweethearts, are often found pulling down their shirt-sleeves and setting in order collars all the while awaiting with unwinking eyes any message that may steal out from the priceless looks of their dear ones. Thanks to the privileges that the Dasra offer for the ripe youths to squeeze out their way through the thick crowds of people to various places of interest in such a close proximity as could never be imagined on other days!

The fun is all the more heightened when one finds here and there some young men, very well dressed, cycling in an awkwardly winding way through the crowds with a monstrous speed of a mile per day, and filling the whole air with the rich scent of high class French perfumes.

Bhanu was once seen in such a crowd. Of course he is a very familiar figure at K—. He is well known by the epithet "The Will Honeycomb of K — College Students' Association." Even when I am penning this, he rides on his "Raleigh" with his characteristic smiles and side-looks before my inward eyes. A tall, lean-yet handsome personality with a chub, by face, a curly crop combed up in the American mode and a charmingly fair complexion resembling Bhanu's, often brings home to the mind of every one of his acquaintances the witty remarks with which he creates mirth and side-splitting laughter in his mates of the Senior B. A. class. The reader may be quite sure that all his wits were unalloyed tributes to the great god of Love.

His 'Raleigh" was his best companion. The characteristic "d-d-d-ding" of the rolling bell fitted with his cycle was enough to relieve the anxious mind of an aimless wanderer on the topmost floor of "Swasti Bhavan." It was none but his best beloved Bala. She knew fully well the time when she could meet Bhanu. Daily at about 6 P.M., the familiar d-d-d-d-ding" would stir up the love-lorn Bala to activity; and in her great eagerness she would see herself in the big mirror fixed upon the table before her and, after brushing her up to her best, would hurry downstairs to meet Bhanu.

Really they loved each other very much. They would fain form a rightful couple but for Bala's superstitions and unsympathetic father, Mr. Rangacharyar. For some reason or other he would not allow their marriage. But the determined lovers could never be quieted down by the foolish threats of an old boor. All that he was able to do was only preventing the frequent meetings of the love-sick young folk. Under such circumstances it was but natural that Bhanu was too careful to miss any opportunity, to meet his best beloved Bala.

The Dasra were indeed very good for men like Bhanu. And Bhanu was not the youth to fail to avail of this occasion. Just like the youths of his age, he too was found struggling on his "Raleigh" through the crowds of gay people in quest of jollity. Indeed he was very busy with his handle-bar. The "d-d-d-d-ding' of his rolling-bell turned out a nuisance for lovers of calmness, because of its never-ceasing monotonous tune. Familiarity breeds contempt, and consequently

there was, practically, no one in the big crowd who would show any deference to the repeated, tireless and unmusical messages of his rolling-bell.

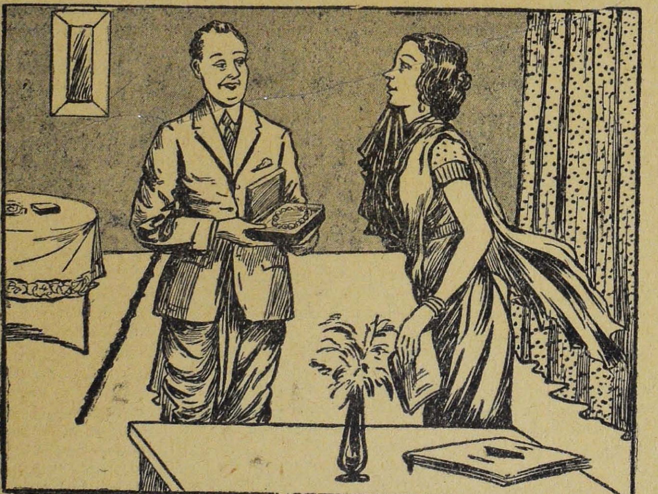
But the tune was not entirely without audience. A noisy clearing up of throat at a distance drew the attention of our "careless free lance" A tall, fair figure, some four yards ahead of the cycle, was greatly impressed with the "d-d-d-d-dings" of the cycle-bell. Bhanu lifted up his head, and lo! to his great joy, he found there, in the crowd, his dear beloved Bala. A fair, tall, slender figure clothed up in the most up-to-date fashion—of course a mixture of the Indian and foreign fashions—with beautifully combed up locks lying on her temples, presented a very nice sight indeed. Her splendidly trimmed up jacket and artistically bordered saree added much to her alluring charms. Really she typified such an aesthetic perfection that no average man could help a sigh of despair after a vain side-glance at her. Poor Bhanu could not prove an exception to the average standard of men. He fell a pray to the alluring charms of Bala, now at their height. Surely a shriek of joy would have preceded his unskilled dashing on his cycle towards his sweetheart through the thick crowds of people of all ages and temperaments, were not the steady look of Bala all messages. Indeed she was an able visual directress, just like the majority of her own sex. He read in her looks a clear warning to be calm. Hence with consummate restraint on his part, Bhanu was able to quiet himself down to some extent. But he could never withdraw his eyes from the charming Bala. Absolutely he lost control over his eyes, and turned out a devoted slave to her beauty. Would she tell him anything more? Could he receive any letter from her with an arrangment for meeting anywhere? No. He got no more message from her. Yet her looks announced a helpless situation. What about the future?" was the serious question that arose in his mind without any solution.

He waited and waited. But no response was forthcoming. With unwinking eyes and eager ears he followed her group all the way struggling through the crowds on his "Raleigh" with the help of his unmusical friend — the rolling-bell. He followed and followed, but no ray of hope was to be seen. He seemed to sink within himself, and leaving the cycle to take its own course, he continued his attention to the movements of his dear Bala.

A few yards further, and hark! a mighty roar of laughter incensed the sense of shame in Bhanu. He was lying on his back with his cycle between his legs beside the light-post on the dirty road. His fine clothes were all soiled by the the filthy things on the road.

Bhanu would have been happier if his friend, Sankaran, was not there witnessing the incident. The sense of shame was all the more intensified in Bhanu by the presence of this loose-tongued Sankaran. But fortunately enough for Bhanu, Bala was too forward to have seen her lover dashing with his cycle against the light-post and rolling on the road as a consequence. But Bhanu hurried up to his feet to avoid more witnesses. Still there was Sankaran meeting him with the question, "Bhanu! what's the matter with you?", as if he was quite ignorant of what had happened to the love-sick youth.

As a matter of fact it was not a fault of his that he dashed against the light-post. His eyes are to be blamed. *It was a pity they were otherwise engaged* while he was riding.



Husband :—"I have purchased a nice pearl necklace for you Meena!"
Wife :—"I wanted a car!"
Husband :—"But Meena, it is really difficult to find an imitation car!"

THE NOISY CLUB

BY S. S. R

PROCEEDINGS of the general meeting of the above club, held on the——th of December 19--, as reported bp Mr. Memory.

(Stenographers, I suppose, have never attempted to take down in their hieroglyphs, the proceeding of a meeting held by any club; nor will it be possible for the quickest of them to do so, if it is a meeting as exciting as the one held by the Noisy Club the other day. But through the kindness of Mr. Memory the following record of the meeting is set out to the world--Ed)

This was a meeting of the club held to discuss the purchase of a mesh-bag for holding Tennis-balls. There was a good attendance. The President occupied the chair.

THE first item on the agenda was the Chairman's opening remarks. The Chairman said he would reserve his remarks to the last, but went on to the second item which was the Secretary's reading the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes were carried by a large majority, even those who had been absent for the previous meeting showing up their hands.

Then the meeting was open for discussion of the subject already mentioned. And up rose Mr. Haste.

Mr. Haste:—"Gentlemen, we are met to decide a particularly important question. I wish we do it early without resorting to the baneful habit of delaying every action. (Hear, Hear). As for the mesh-bag, all of us agree—at least we ought to agree—that it is a necessity. (A voice: "Question") Well, I see that there *are* some who think that the bag is unnecessary. I shall sit down, and let us hear more views on the subject.

Mr. Opposer:— "Friends, somehow I have got the reputation, good or bad I do not know, that I oppose every motion moved here If I ever oppose a proposition, I do not do it for the sake of opposing it. ("You do") Oh, I see, do I do it? I must really thank my friend for telling me that. However, I feel that I should oppose this motion that we should go in for a mesh-bag. Tennis balls can very easily be put anywhere, and they do not need a bag. Tennis players are always wanting this, that and the other thing ("No, No') and this is one of them. If I were given the power, I should see that the Tennis court is abolished, (Cries of "Shut up" and "Nonsense" and "Sit down"). I am sorry there is such a disturbance but let me tell my friends that I always put the interests of the club first in my mind. ("Humbug") Mr. President, I have been insulted here to-day, and I declare that the words used are entirly unparliamentary. I sit down under a protes."

Mr. Flippant:—"Gentlemen, I won't talk about the desirability or otherwise of buying a bag. (A voice: "Then sit down") Suppose we pass a resolution to have a bag, why not we make one ourselves? (Voices: "Absurd", "Order, order"). I am not going to be brow beaten by all of you here." ("Silly", "Order, order", "sit down", etc).

Mr. Solemn:—"Mr. President, if this is the way in which the meeting is carried on, well, where are we getting to?".

President:—"Gentelmen, I am afraid I shall have to insite on some more discipline here, I do want the proceedings to go on in a more sensible manner."

Mr. Mischief:—"I propose the meeting be adjourned, because the old bag has not completely given way. It is fit to be used for nearly a month more, and we may discuss the matter then." (Excitement and cries of "sit down" "order, order").

Mr. Haste:—I raise a point of order. Is it right to move an adjournment motion now, ln the middle of a proposition?"

Secretary:—"Mr. President, we may decide whether or not we are to proceed with the meeting by the general sense of the house. If members do not want to continue, there is no point in our wasting time." ("Carry on", "let us continue".)

President:—"Well, we mean business here. I suggest members should be silent and be concise in their speeches".

MrFlippant:— "Gentlemen, why not we send for opinion from other clubs? Does every club have a mesh-bag to hold tennis balls? It may mean some expense by way of postage, and I think that we can vote the amount", ("perfectly silly").

Mr. Oppos r:—"Mr. President, we see now quite clearly what troubles arise over this simple affair. I suggest that the easiest solution is to vote down the proposition. (cries of "sit down" "absurd" 'Don't talk" etc) I do not know why members are so short tempered-to-day. ("Withdraw the word" "we won't hear you till you apologise") I *will* be heard and I *will* have my say. I have a right to it." ("No, you shan't talk" "Order, order." ———)

At this point the Secretary whispered something in the Chairman's ears and the Chairman rose and said:—

"Gentlemen, I am really ashamed to see that you are not able to decide such a minor question as this. I really do not know why it is that members, quite sensible at other times, should grow turbulent whenever there is a meeting. It is very late now, and I am afraid the meeting will not be finished to-day, judging from the nature of the discussion. I rule that the meeting is adjourned. The Secretary will notify when the discussions may be resumed. And so we disperse."

And the meeting terminated amidst great noise and excitement.

AVIATOR!

What had filled my youthful dreams,
In place of Greek or Latin themes,
Or beauty's wild, bewildering beams ?
Aviator !

The first baloons I sought to sail,
Soap-bubbles fair, but all too frail,
Or kites—but thereby hangs a tale.
Aviator !

What made me launch from attic tall,
A kitten or a parasol,
And watch their bitter, frightful fall ?
Aviator !

What youthful dreams of high renown
Bade me inflate my dressing gown,
That went not up, nor yet came down ?
Aviator !

My first ascent, I may not tell :
Enough to know that in that well
My first high aspirations fell,
Aviator !

For lo ! I see perfected rise
The vision of my boyish eyes
The messenger of upper skies.
Aviator !

—*Sheikh Iftekhar Rasool.*

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(3) *Consolation prizes.* Entries as received will be numbered, some of the entry forms we shall select and purchase, the lower number at the highest price and so on. ***Therefore, post your entry as early as possible.***
and (4) *Special prizes on completion of this series of 6 puzzles.*
(*a*) To selected competitors who have regularly entered and failed to win.
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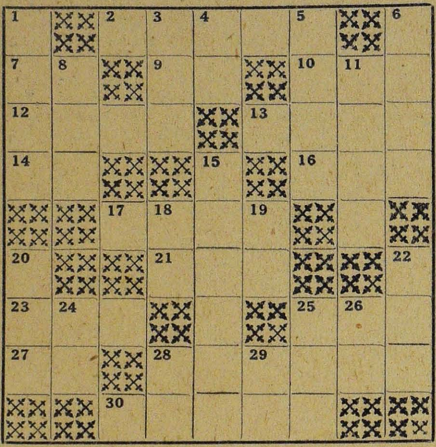
—————CUT HERE—————

GROUP 1, NUMBER 1.



Clues across.

2. Spear fish.
7. One —— the other,
9. Prefix of negation or refusal.
10. Common Mahommedan name.
12. Sounds like a multitude, but it's a hop kiln,
13. Cease,
14. Belongs to me.
16. Opposite to a brother and short too.
17. Put court first, up your sleeve? Hardly!
21. In the centre,
23. A scrap starts with 7 across,
25. A promissory-note.
27. You and I get together.
28. Flexible and easily bent,
30. Geese start a letter too soon to suit a Brahmin.

Clues down.

1. There's space here no doubt for it's empty,
3. Not in.
4. One,
5. Headgear,
6. On some roofs,
8. Gleam or beam, of hope perhaps.
11. Between the ribs and lower limbs.
15. Eyelashes,
18. I ——, we are,
19. D. D (actual),
20. Cattle,
22. Oh! get out!!
24. Concerning (abbrev :),
25. This with 25 across gives you all the vowels.
26. Touching,
28. Short for father,
29. Here we have it, the very thing in fact.

USE BLOCK CAPITALS.

*Name*____________________

*Address*____________________

____

Rs.________remitted by________No.________

RULES.

1. The entrance fee is Re. 1 per entry, to be remitted by Money Order or Indian Postal Orders. Post Office receipts (not acknowledgments) for the former to be attached to the solutions, enclose Postal Orders with your entries and retain the counterfoil. British Postal Orders of equivalent value also accepted.
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9. A wrong letter affecting two words will count as two errors.

Address all entries and fees to:—**APEX BUREAU, 11, Quadrant Square, BANGALORE.**

CLOSING DATE, 15—11—35.

THE STOLEN CASH

By K. R. N.

She picked his pockets while he slept. He woke up and found himself saved from imprisonment.

THE stillness of night reigned supreme in Kalima Gully of Bombay. A few streets away lay the West End Square, seething with the lights and life that outvie day in certain quarters of every city. But here in Kalima Gully, the quarter of the genteel poor, silence pervaded. Silence and darkness.

At the end of the Gully is situated a tiny house. There is absolutely no outward sign of life within, for all the doors and windows are barred and bolted. Not even a faint glimmer of light can be perceived even through the crevices of the doors and windows.

But what a scene awaits the eye of anyone who can enter this house at this hour!

Young Dorabjee lay profoundly asleep in the upstairs of this house. It was only twelve, yet the youth was already sleeping like a log. There was reason for this. youthful Dorabjee had had some arrears of work to clear and so he had been detained at his office till rather a late hour. He was so tired out that no sooner had his head hit the pillow than he found himself in the arms of Morpheus.

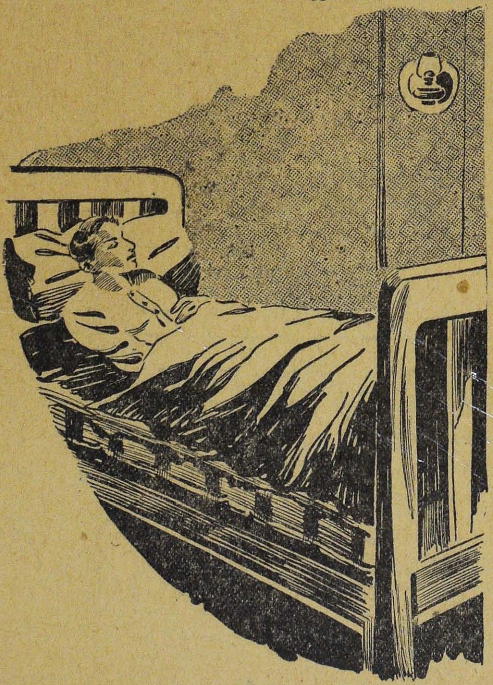
A footstep sounded on the landing. The dimly-lit interior of the bedroom suddenly found itself flooded with the light of a hurricane lantern. The person holding it softly stole into Dorabjee's bedroom. It was a girl!

She was about nineteen, fair after the fashion of all Parsees, and beautiful. She paused at the threshold of the bedroom and took a cautious peep within. The sight of Dorabjee slumbering away peacefully seemed to reassure her. Leaving the lantern outside she tiptoed with infinite care into the room. She shot a quick and searching glance all around the place and her eyes brightened with interest when they fell upon an overcoat which was hanging on the wall.

She quickly glided upto it and plunged her hand into its pockets. A rapid turnover of the contents yielded her a rich harvest. For, from the inner-pocket, she withdrew a thick wad of notes neatly tied up with a string.

Suddenly she shrank against the wall and held her breath—for Dorabjee had moved restlessly in his bed. She waited still, taut, and alarmed for the space of some minutes. Then, reassured that it was only a sleepy movement, she quietly slipped out of the room, picked up the lantern and with ghostly noiseless steps crept downstairs.

"Here they are," she said in a thrilling whisper, extending the pilfered notes to a young man of aristrocratic appearence who was waiting for



... *From the inner pocket*

her. The youth shot a satisfied look at her face, and drawing her softly against him with one hand, received the wad with the other

"Count them, darling," cooed the comely maid. One hand holding her caressingly by the waist, he flicked the notes one by one with the fingers of the other in swift and expert checking.

"They are alright, beloved," he smiled and embracing her tenderly kissed her full on the mouth passionately.

"Oh, sweetheart, when will it be?" he asked her in vibrant tones with his eyes looking emotionally into hers.

She trilled out a laugh in answer.

"Oh, it will be alright, dearest Ardeshir," she replied kissing him lightly on the nose. "Now it is time you went out."

He kissed her again warmly and left the house.

The next morning young Dorabjee yawned and stretched his limbs in bed. Then he sat up, rubbed his eyes and, getting into his carpet-slippers, he strode over to his overcoat to fetch out a cigarette.

His heart stood still and his eyes opened wide with fear!

Where were the thousand rupees, neatly bundled up in hundred ten rupee notes? They were there in the inner pocket of his overcoat when he went to bed the previous night——— Where were they now?

Beads of perspiration broke out on his forehead. Almost trembling in every limb he made an exhaustive and minute search of not only his overcoat but everything else in the room which he considered might hold concealed the missing wad.

It was a very pale, very frightened, and very sad looking Dorabjee that came down for his breakfast. His sister had already laid the table and was obviously waiting for him.

"You are late by fifteen minutes, brother mine!" she said smiling mischievously and wagging an impish finger at him.

"Dash the lateness, Mamie!" Dorabjee exploded gruffly. "Something in the nature of a catastrophe has befallen me and here you are sitting at your ease and chaffing me on being late."

Mamie opened her eyes wide.

"Catastrophe, dear brother?"

"Yes, I have lost a thousand rupees. I had them in my overcoat pocket last night. I woke up and found myself robbed. The whole lot of it——one thousand rupees in notes of ten——is clean gone. Gone, Mamie, gone!" Dorabjee cupped his chin and let out a moan.

Mamie faced him squarely.

"One thousand rupees, brother? Where had you one thousand rupees from? Such a large amount too. and you never mentioned a word about it to me last night!" She put a world of accusation into her voice.

Dorabjee broke down,

"My dear Mamie," he broke out, almost holding back a sob," I'll tell you the whole truth. But——suspicion, sudden and swift, stole into his heart——" say, Mamie, have *you* seen anything of the money, by some chance?"

The sister did not reply. She just sat looking at him intently. The clear look in her eyes made Dorabjee squirm uncomfortably.

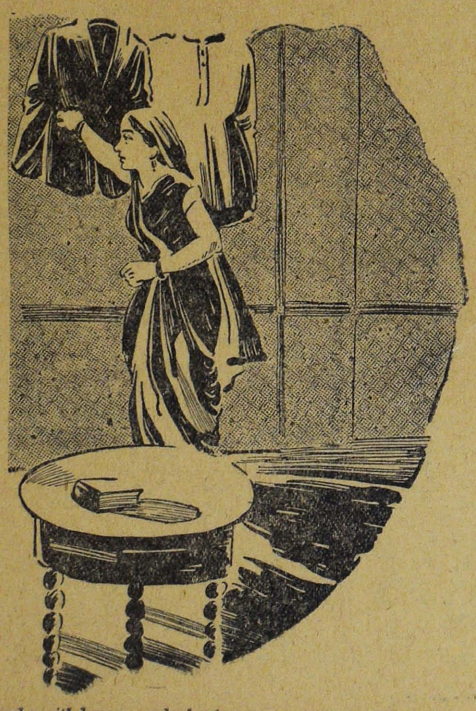
"Pardon me, Mamie, I thought— you know, a desperate man thinks a lot of things. I am desperate, dear sister. I have been racing heavily of late and I owe a great deal of money. Nearly seven hundred rupees, to tell you the truth. And—and—yesterday I borrowed a thousand rupees from some one. I kept the wad of notes in my overcoat pocket last night and this morning I find it missing. Oh, Mamie!"

"Borrowed it from whom, brother?" Her voice was clear, stern and stabbing.

Dorabjee looked at her quizzically and blinked.

"Very good," he declared in decided tones. "I shall tell you the whole truth, Mamie. To whom else can I disclose it? Yesterday I was tempted. Tempted very badly. You know I stayed late to clear off some arrears in my office, don't you? I found, quite by accident, that the iron safe was open. Wads and wads of notes— why not just one for myself, I thought. To think was to act. There, Mamie, that's one truth. I stole the office cash—and someone has stolen it from me."

(Continued on page 21).



she withdrew a wad of notes

Suitor :—There isn't much I can say for myself. I'm just a plain citizen and a taxpayer.

Father :—A taxpayer eh ? Income-tax or dog tax ?

* * *

A young Irishman was taking an examination for entrance into the army, and was asked to define 'military strategy.'

His answer was : Military strategy is when you don't let the enemy discover that you are out of ammunition, but just keep on firing.

* * *

" You know you'll never have your name inscribed in the hall of Fame."

" P' raps not. But I'd rather have people asking why it isn't there than why it is.

* * *

Mrs. A : " Shall I ask the cook for references ?"

Mr. A : " No, get him to submit samples."

* * *

An inquisitive old lady was always way-laying the new minister in the street to ask him questions. One day she stopped him and said :

" Mr. Brown, would you please tell me the difference between a cherubium and a seraphim.

The young minister thought wildly for a moment. Then he replied with an inspiration.",

" Well, they did have a difference, I believe, but they have made it up."

* * *

" Molly, have you been doing anything to the ink ?"

" I have only put some water in it, mummy, to make it weak. I've been writing to daddy and I wanted to whisper something to him.

* * *

" I cannot understand " said the vicar, " why so many of Congregation go straight from the church to the public house. It is very discouraging."

" Oh," said the bright curate, " that's thirst after righteousness."

* * *

The surgeons wife picked up the book her husband had just laid down.

" John," she said, " why have you ripped out the back part of this new book ?"

He looked astounded at her. " Oh ! my dear, he sighed," it was entitled ' Appendix ' and I took it out quite without thinking.

* * *

" Yes, my son went out west several years ago to make his fortune."

" And what is he worth now ?"

" I don't exactly know ; but six months ago the authorities were offering him £ 1000 for him.

* * *

Irate Father : Tell that shameless young man to withdraw his arm from your waist !"

Polite daughter : " Oh, you tell him yourself—he's a perfect stranger to me.

* * *

Telephone Operator : It costs seventy cents to talk to Bloomfield."

Caller : " Can't you make a special rate for just listening ? I want to call my wife."

* * *

Brown said he would teach his parrot to say " Hullo " in an hour. He started and went at it for thirty minutes without his parrot taking the slightest notice.

At last the bird turned his head and fixing Brown with a cold eye, screamed.

" Number engaged."

* * *

" Ah, he's a hard man. Have you noticed his eyes ?"

" Yes, and I thought one looked kinder than the other."

" Quite, and that's a glass one.

* * *

She : " I think that when a man marries he should give up his club."

He : " Great Scott ! Why, that's just the time he needs it !"

* * *

A little boy went shopping with his mother, and wanted everything he saw in the shop windows. At last his mother cried out in exasperation : " Billy, are you sure you wouldn't like the moon as well ?"

Billy looked up at the half moon and said with disgust : " No ; it is broken."

* * *

A man entered an Aberdeen shop and bought an attache case.

" May I wrap it up for you " asked the assistant.

" Oh, no, thank you ' returned the man ; just put the string and paper inside,"

* * *

" I don't care if it is a high class party," hissed out the convention hating young husband ; " I'm going to be my own self !"

" Very well," said the wife, resignedly, " but if you start tossing coconuts about, I'm going home."

* * *

A music hall artist was calling for long words.

" Terminological," came a voice from the stalls.

" Thanks—another please."

" Elastic," yelled a hoarse voice from the gallery.

" That is n't long enough."

" Then stretch it !"

* * *

" What nice buttons you have put on your little boy's jacket," remarked the visitor. " I once had some like that,"

" Yes," said the vicar's wife. " I get all my buttons from the collection plate."

(Continued from page 19).

Mamie rose and went over to her brother. She placed tender hands on his shoulders.

" I stole it, brother," " she confessed in level, cool accents." For your own good, dear. Soon after you left the office, Ardeshir, your colleague found out that you had stolen the wad. He rushed up here and told me· I came straight up to your room and stole it back from your overcoat and returned it to him. He promised to replace it and speak no word of it to any one,"

Dorabjee had gone white as a sheet with panic.

" So Ardeshir knows ! " he ejaculated, wringing his hands desperately. " Oh God, suppose he tells some one ! "

" Have no fear, dear," reassured Mamie. " He won't tell any one, you can take it from me. Now I have a confession to make to you, my wicked brother. I have hidden it from you for a long time, but I must tell you that I love Ardeshir deeply. He loves me, too. Will you give us your consent and your blessings, Dorabjee darling ? "

Dorabjee was no longer pale. He heaved a sigh of relief and even smiled. Then he yawned and said, " That solves the problem for me ! "

" What ? " asked the anxious damsel.

" Why, I'm sure my future brother-in law will never tell against me. I can rest in peace ! "

Mamie kissed Dorabjee on his forehead.

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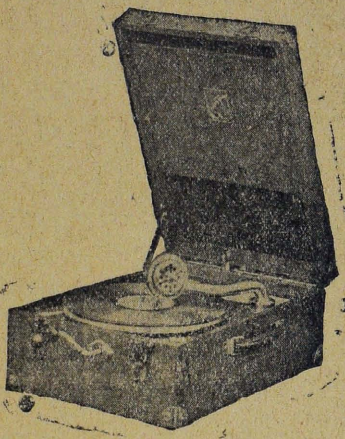

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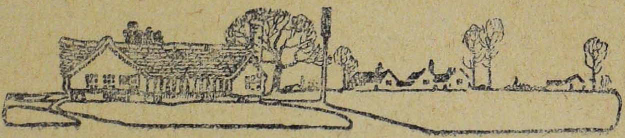

Warned About Sharpers

By M. S. Anantha Rao.

IT has always been thus with me. The strangest things happen in my life every alternate minute. To-day I feel quite rummy and potty over some absent novelty and sigh away like the Jews after the flesh-pots of Egypt. To-morrow there comes to me, like the Biblical Manna, the very thing I want and takes my breath away, quite. I cannot breathe placidly twice in succession. Every third time I have either a gasp or a moan or a hiccough.

Perhaps you all know how chummy I am with the Editor of the 'Why buy me' weekly. I know him from almost a century. I confess with great pride that we have travelled by the same train and ambled down the same sheet once in the late 'eighties. On a glorious day (or was it night)........ well, let me not branch off to sentimental episodes !

YES ! It was on Saturday last. The day had been a Red-letter day for me. The first post had brought me the sweet tidings that my five hundred and sixth article had been accepted for publication in the trashy 'Midnight Herald' magazine. And then, there was a blinking nice letter from the Editor of the aforesaid 'Why buy me' weekly, couched in the rarest of the softest and daintiest terms. Wasn't all this a blessing to me a return to happy days ? If misfortunes boast of coming in truck-loads and battalions, I beg to affirm it is no less the case with blessings. Who said miracles are rare, like a woman's beard ? Perhaps in books and tracts, but never with me ! Yes Sirs, it was a jolly nice surprise for always yours truly' as I shall proceed to dish up for your honours' edification. Well, here is the Editor's non-descript——I'm sorry. I mean the typescript.

10th Sept. '35.
SHINGLE STREET.

To
M. S. Anantha Rao,
Hunsur

My dear Bob,

You'll be delighted to hear that Tuff's 'Broomstick' serial (or cereal if you like) has at last gone to the press. The wretched manuscript was all written down in a none-too-legible-by gosh hand like yours. Our compositor has sent words to me that he'll not be responsible for any change whatsoever in the story. So I'm afraid you'll have to read the compositor's story instead of Tuff's. Watch for the grand treat !

You've asked for a novel sort of competition worth trying, haven't you? I've just compiled a lovely puzzle the like of which you've never set your peepers on—and absolutely free to boot ! There are only 1082 alternatives. You can be sure of your prize this time !

By the bye, how do you like the poems of Niell the Elder whose fourth canto of ' ZANY' appeared in our last issue ? I assure you, he's a real acquisition and almost the man for *vers libre* ! The other day he came along to me. We had some formal talk and you can imagine my surprise when he barged into impromptu limericks on my French-cut moustaches ! He gave me his horoscope, knowing that I dabble in astrology a little. On tabulation, I found that he was born precisely under the same star as Shakespeare, I scent some other points of similitude between the two. So I may be pardoned if I speak a little highly of him ?

Mr. Lunch, the author of that peerless story ' All for an ulcer,' has sent in some more MSS from his pen. The only grunt I have about him is that the blighter wants double the usual remuneration for his stories. I've got my own ways of dealing with chaps of his ilk, you know. Be sure I shall deal him square.

Last Monday night, I got invited to a party in Mr. Mani's house in George Town. You know what a nice place it is—with that delightful strip of a garden running round the house and the marble fountain spraying incessantly ! There was a jolly tiffin-party and music to add ! Did you ever know that Ju—Ju is an expert violinist ? He played while Mani sang. It was an ideal combination—I sat entranced. I am proud that I have such all-round men for my collaborators !

Of my personal affairs now. Jupiter now occupies the eighth house from my Rising Sign. As a result, I am waist-deep in troubles. By yesterday's post, I got a threatening letter from a fellow who styles himself as Bum-Bum. You know I have been giving unclaimed manuscripts to my son for working out sums upon. It appears this Bum—Bum has come into possession of one of his manuscripts bearing my Sonny's handwriting. No doubt, he commends my admirable bent for economy. At the same time, he hints he'll be forced to go to unpleasant lengths unless I round up the affair to his satisfaction. I have to meet him this evening on Elliot's Beach.

My boy ! I can only yield myself up and say like king Arthur, " Let what'll be, be." My grey matter is not so strong and shock-proof as of yore.

Ah, now that I remember ! What a Sphinx you are, I say ! My friend here says one can get very good Coorg coffee in your place at very cheap rates. Why not send a tin or two to your Editor, man ? I hope you will.

Yesterday evening, I was strolling idly in the Adyar gardens. Niece Nolly (you know she writes for our ladies' page) came up to me and demanded a kiss. I suppose she was all nuts on me from the very outset. Perhaps the gathering dusk encouraged her. I refused it her because her face is like the dry bark of a mango tree. She pursued me. I ran and ran with her in my wake till I reached the Railway station. Fortunately, a train was about to start for Jalarpet. I boarded it without a ticket, just to save myself

from her odious caress. It's only to-day that I returned. Of course, I had to pay double the fare at Jalarpet last night.

I have trained two first rate cocks for fighting. In the approaching cock-fight contest, not even Ratnaswamy of Bangalore can ever dream of winning a bet from me!

Please reply me. For Heaven's sake don't you forget the coffee-powder.

Yours truly,
Nipper."

I set the letter down and heaved a sigh of pleasure. How emotional like a school-boy was our chic editor! What Yankee frankness? He had in-deed honoured me with a heart-to-heart and aorta-to-aorta letter. Could I prove myself a wretch by refusing his little request?

So then, I bought two big tins of first-grade coffee-powder and jazzed off by the evening bus. The next afternoon found me at Madras station. After much haggling, I netted in a taxi-chap to drive me (in the taxi, mind you!) to Shingle Street for a hire of five annas and six pies. Ten minutes later I was gaping before a big board which read," The Why-buy-me "magazine office:"

It was Sunday and the office was closed to all appearance. I asked the chauffeur to wait and went up the steps The main door was slightly ajar. I peeped in.

Some four gentlemen were sitting round a big table, engaged in a plea-sant game of chess, One of them, a big swarthy fish, looked up and sourly demanded what I wanted.

"I want to see the Editor," I bleat-ed, taken aback a little.

"Wants—to—see—the—E d i t or," slowly repeated the black gent and was busy once again with his dice,

I stood on for another five minutes. At last one of them, a youth of twenty, took pity on me and approached me. "What do you want here, sir?" he asked, I believe his tone was a little more insolent than my other friend's, I explained how I had brought coffee-powder for the Editor, according to his request,

On hearing this piece of news, the office-boy (for he it was) got very polite and led me to a chair. "Here, Sub," he called out to the big black man, "this here gentleman has brought two blinkin'tins of coffee-powder for our Nipper. How nice, how cute, how ripping!"

The office-boy almost hugged me.

It was now the turn of the Sub-Editor to pay his respects to me. He said he was damn glad to see me, wished me damn good luck, asked me whether I had damn nice articles for consideration and finally advised me to trot back to my place by the very next train because there were many damn clever sharpers in Madras.

Well, in the meanwhile, I'd almost forgotten about our good Editor! I asked the Sub. "Oh," he smiled nonchalantly, lighting up a cigarette, "he's off to B'lore for to-day's cock-fight contest."

"You may leave the tins here," he told me settling down to another game, "I'll damn well flick them on to the ogre's booth."

I deposited the tins there and drove off to a hotel for feeding my internal combustion engine.

The next evening I was back in my place, eating ground-nuts

This morning, I got another inti-mate letter from our Editor, apprising me of his splendid success in the cock-fight tourney. But the pity of it all was that, so far from thanking me for the coffee-powder, he railed at me for not bringing it. "My Sub told me,' he wrote, "that you'd dropped in here, But how could you find it in your heart to forget my little request?"

Such is the world!

I was tongue-tied. The truth dawn-ed upon me that the other blighters had clean made away with it.

Should I write to him the real fact, I argued within myself. If I did, the Sub and the office-boy would see that no further MSS of mine reached the Editor. If I didn't, it meant another precious tenner for me, in addition to reproach. Oh, what a dilemma, by my relief-nib!

After all, the Sub was right when he so good-naturedly warned me about sharpers in Madras!

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•The FUNNY MAG. 5th Oct. '35

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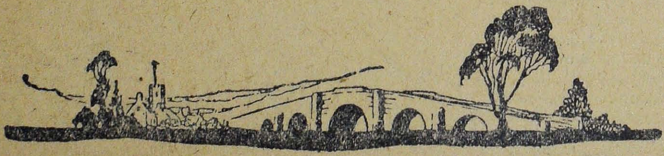

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Impressions of a Madras Studio

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By Gopalakrishnan.

MOST of the 'Talkie fans' who spend rapturous evenings in perfect enjoyment or suffer in silence hours of mental torture, witnessing our Tamil Talkies, are not, I dare say, aware of the inordinate patience and the immense labour, painful and plodding, that each picture involves, before it is released. Sometime back, through the courtesy of a friend who is engaged in the business, I had an opportunity of watching some scenes of a popular "talkie" being "shot" in a local studio, and I may tell you at once, that anyone who witnesses the nerve-racking process in that atmosphere of paint, powder and perspiration, with wonder, how all the glamour, thrill and "colour" are imported into it, by merely projecting it on the "Silver Screen."

I SHALL attempt here, to describe a typical Madras Studio, with its limitations in "property" and finance, and consequently I may also add, artistic talent. It is neither just nor correct to compare Western standards and conditions with ours, but it must be said to the credit of the indigenous talent and enterprise, that with all the innumerable handicaps, it has not failed to move with the times, and keep abreast of the latest technical developments, as far as its finances would permit. But I am constrained to observe, that the eagerness to exploit the present craze for vernacular talkies, has almost stifled real art, both in acting and presentation It has to be admitted also, however painful it may be, that the inaccuracy in small details so often noticed, could have been easily avoided, if only a little more attention were bestowed by the Director. Every lover of Art will agree that such inaccuracies however trivial, go a very long away in detracting from the value of the picture.

Take for example, a scene depicting the heroine, bewailing her fate in a cave. The scenario requires that the heroine should be holding a couple of babies in her arms. It is so easy to procure two live babies, but in the picture I saw beings hot, the heroine was holding two celluloid dolls! The Settings' were excellent, the acting, was quite good and even the music was appropriate. But the whole effect was shattered because, the babies were not real babies, in flesh and blood. When the picture was released, I noticed that the audience were really impressed with the heroine's acting, and were even prepared to shed a few tears. But when the 'celluloid' babies cought their attention, they roared with laughter; tragedy was turned to burlesque. I pitied the poor heroine who did her very best and should have really got honours for that particular scene. Perhaps, the omission to secure real babies was an oversight on the part of the Director and the Cameraman, but all the same, it is inexcusable.

Among the various officers, artists, and other executives that run the administration, and working of a Studio, naturally, the 'Director' claims our attention first and foremost. He is, more or less, the pivot round whom the whole machinery turns. We are app to associate with that mystic word, such artistic and intellectual giants as Eric Von Stroheim, Cecil B. de Mille, Alexander Korda, etc., who have literally revolutionised the industry with their daring ideas, original conceptions and perfect execution. But we will be sadly disappointed if we look for such distinctive features in South India. In short, the very best South Indian Director, cannot com pare with even the worst Hollywood or Elstree specimen.

The South Indian Director, I notice, is very much handicapped by the fact that he knows very little of film-technique or Studio art. No wonder, therefore that he is flooded with suggestions from every quarter. The cameraman has his own particular ideas of how a particular scene should be arranged or how the actors should acqut themselves, the 'script writer' interferes every now and then with his own suggestions and even the visitors are so solicitous that they are unable to resist the temptation to add their own quota. The net result is the poor Director is completely at sea and the actors do not know whose instructions they are to follow!

As for our actors and actresses the less said about them the better. They have had absolutely no training before the "Mike": some who are stage veterans or 'Gramophone Stars' are more intent upon singing in season and out of season, than acting. The Director's task in training this inadequate and ill-assorted rabble is a really stupendous affair. Even the so-called heroes and heroines are "foot-light conscious" and have to be literally 'Coached.' I saw a Director wasting two valuable hours in teaching two sentries how to salute simultaneously. Even after such grilling practice, they failed at the crucial moment, when the actual shooting took place!

Everyone connected with the studio, dresses wilh a careless and studied indifference. In fact they seem to take a pride in their sartorial exhibitions! Slippers, pants or pantaloons, shirts and topees or evening hats in every conceivable angle, form the usual outfit. Some, entirely regardless

(Continued on page 27)

AVENGED

BY
K. V. GIRI.

FATE! None can escape from you. No, no, she cannot be his daughter. So glorious a creature and innocent. She is a child, a darling. But, Oh God. It still rings in my ear. Seven years ago in the very room, he told me. "Sir he has disgraced me. I am a ruined man." My passions flew at a fast pace then and I raved to avenge him by killing his murderer.

Father, how can I tell her, of this. She is ignorant of her father's villany. I shivered; a thought flashed. She is his daughter after all. Now can I tell her, that I am the man who is out to kill her father. She will be stunned. No, no, I will not, I will never. I turned round the room and saw the portrait of my father, the blood curdled. I rose up. I will, I will father, avenge you. I'll tell her everything. She has a right to defend her father and let her. I sacrifice the one thing dear to me, father. "Duty to father first and anything next. I perspired and fell in a swoon muttering Marie! Marie!........

THE day dawned. It was a beautiful day. I was indifferent to it. I walked from my home to Marie's house. The birds were merrily singing; the green velvety lawn covered with dew, sent a thrill through my veins. I walked on to her home. Unmindful of the morning glory of nature. I saw her in her garden plucking flowers. She was wonderful, devastatingly beautiful, Nature, ! You have lavished everything you can bestow. I lost my senses for a while only to recover with redoubled determination to tell everything. I looked up the blue canopy, tears trickling down. Stars! yesterday I was the most contented man. To-day my destiny has changed. Suddenly wiping the tears, I walked on, to my eternal doom.

"Edmund, Edmund" she ran to me all smiles and outstretched hands.

I bowed down.

"Edmund, what happened." She lifted my head in her smooth hands. I shivered, I was about to take her in my arms and crush her in my embrace, kiss her, but my impulse was checked through, I don't know, from some, hidden force.

"Edmund tell me please everything. You are pale, ghastly pale. You look old," saying she kissed me. Suddenly I was roused as if from grave. "Marie don't do that. I want, to tell.........you.........something,

Tell me, what is it. I cannot bear this sphinx-like silence.

Marie ! It is something terrible.

Terrible ! Terrible ! To you......

No. To you !

Me.........me......no you are joking. Edmund nothing terrible can happen till you are with me.

I couldn't stand it and with a sheer will I said to Marie. I am Edmund the son of the late beloved and revered Robert John Edmund, who died of disgrace which......"I faltered.

Edmund, what is it? Please......

Your father brought it on him.

My Father ?

Yes ! I have told you the truth, Marie. I am decided, I want to avenge my father.

You are going to kill him. No, no you will not.........

I will..........

" He is my father. Pity him for my sake."

Marie I have told you, I will not break the vow. I will accomplish it even if it costs me my life.

You have no heart. You are mad to slay. I saw her straightening herself blood rushing and eyes burning. I will save him, save him. I will never see you again ....again.

Marie you have a right to defend your father. I have lost the most desirable thing in my life. You, Marie, there is nothing in the world to live for. Yesterday.........you were mine. To-day I became the rejected creature by you. I will die in the attempt Marie or return after avenging him to you. Then you can kill me and be avenged.

I saw tears clouding her face. She was standing at the gate like one of Michael Angel'os master piece Edmund I love you, love you and she collapsed. I forgot everything. I ran to her, lifted her corpse like form. I was chilled for a while but her bosom was heaving. I kissed her, on the lips and was about to carry her in when I heard a shot. I was stunned at the suddenness of the shot. I ran with my burden upstairs and broke into the room. I saw a man lying on floor, with a revolver. Why did you do it I asked him. Trembling I placed Marie on a sofa and went to him. He was gasping. He moved a bit and opened his eyes. There was a glitter in his eyes. I saw, sure death on his face, My boy promise me, to keep it locked in your heart. I will tell you "and saying he tried to get up but he couldn't. I lifted him in my hands, his head resting on my hands."

Edmund, I am the father of Marie.

You, you, I never saw you here it is a lie.

No, be calm. After that fatal night. I went abroad leaving Marie here not to regard her future.

So you went away why.

I cannot say it. But Edmund he is the one thing I loved in the world. That is my one virtue trailing in a labrynth of vices. I am a criminal, a murderer, but she should not and must not know it. I want that promise from you.

I knew he was dying. Sympathy overwhelmed me. I promise you," I said.

Edmund, I heard you say everything. You never knew me but I know you. I could have killed you a year ago but my daughter would have killed herself. I knew she cannot live without you. She has told me many times of her love for you. I couldn't do it because, Edmund, I cannot allow her to suffer. She is everything to me. I want to die and make room for her happiness Take her with you. I know what she is to you. But forgive me and never say anything to her, and let me die with the consolation that I was adored and respected by my Marie at least.

(Continued from page 25)

of the heat, affect flannels and tweeds. The consumption of cigarettes, in a studio, will gladden the heart of the most pessimistic tobacco-grower ! The lingo is Hollywoodian or a bad imitation of it. "O. K," is so often pressed into service, that it has almost lost its significance. 'Come on, come on, come on,' bawls out the Director, with a shining whistle between his smoking teeth, calling for a "featured player". 'O. K,' replies an underling ! what exactly the " O. K, " means here, I am unable to fathom. Does it indicate that the player is alive or that the Director is "O. K," or what ? Again, "how is that ?" cries the Director and looks at the "Recordist" after a speech lasting ten seconds has been rehearsed. "O. K," answers the ' Property Man ' from somewhere ! why ? or, what is 'O. K ?' He himself does not know.

The most important, powerful, if not so widely known of all the Studio Executives, is the ' Recordist'. He is a Mussolini and Hitler rolled into one with a dash of Marshal Pilsudski. I will tell you more about him, in my next article. Is this O. K ?

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The Priceless Piffle

By Mrs. Sarada Bai.

KAMALA stopped playing on the harmonium and looked up at her brother stepping into the room, his head hung down. Jagadish looked ill with his deep sunken eyes, blanched cheeks and weak frame. He removed his shoes and sank into the cosy armchair and lighted a cigarette. Kamala was much worried to observe her brother's failing physic and the cause for his depression was no secret to her. Jagadish was in love with Meena.

Meena was young and a beauty. A slender slip of a girl, with a shock of black silky hair, bright sparkling eyes and a sweet little red mouth. Meena was a wee bit spoiled by too many adorers and constantly reminded of her figure. Jagadish loved her to distraction but his love was mute, dumb. After a hurried evening meal, everyday, Jagadish rushed up to meet his heartless sweetheart at the "Palace gardens" and waited at least an hour before Meena arrived with her mischievous smile.

"I am not late. Am I?"

"It does n't really matter, Meena, dear" was the usual meaningless reply. Jagadish was not venturesome. Not the type of men who sweep their 'loves' off their feet. Kamala pitied the crestfallen figure lounging on the chair and wanted to comfort him.

"What's wrong, Jagadish? Are you ill" asked Kamala rising up to her feet.

"Not ill, my dear. It's Meena" confided Jagadish making a long wry face. "It's really sickening, dear, how she makes me wait. And when she comes, she talks about whether, Hitlerism, and things I don't get at. She's evasive, dear. That's what she is. Never had said "Yes" yet and it is six long months. P'raps there's another man coming in, I s'pose".

"Don't you worry darling" interrupted Kamala as she moved up to him and kissed him on the pale cheek. 'It'd be alright, brother. She would say 'yes' tomorrow" said Kamala brightly.

"If only it happened' smiled Jagadish boyishly.

Chuckling to herself the next evening Kamala stealthily went up to her brother's wardrobe and returned with a shining white coat. She put the hall clock back ten minutes and hurriedly ran down to answer the knocks on the door. It was Jagadish.

After a hurried bath and meal Jagadish dressed himself and was about to leave when Kamala stopped him.

"Hullo, brother. Try this coat this evening. It's lucky.

"You big silly" laughed Jagadish turning towards his sister.

"Never mind, brother. Try this coat" persisted Kamala handing him the white coat. "And remember it was in this coat you first interviewed your boss'"

"As you please, then, my dear" whispered Jagadish with a mock bow and put on the white coat. And like a flash he left the house the next minute.

Kamala was busy sewing late in the night when with a loud bang the front door flew open and Jagadish bounced into the room like a schoolboy. He was all smiles and radiantly happy.

"You were right, sister" Meena said. Yes, this evening" said Jagadish dancing about the the room in sheer joy.

"I knew, Jagadish. Did n't I tell you" observed Kamala.

"Of course you did, my dear", admitted Jagadish playfully. "But you don't know all".

"What was that" questioned Kamala looking surprised.

"First of all, I was late by ten minutes and she flew into rage. She would n't be convinced, dear. I explained to her my watch was n't keep ing correct time but she just frowned".

"Well" said Kamala feeling glad of her plans.

"And then it happened" proceeded Jagadish excitedly "For a second she looked full into my face and picked up a long thin thread of black shiny hair from the lapel of my coat. The blood rushed up to her face and I was much perplexed. How could I explain? There was a lump in my throat.

"Who is the girl, Jagadish questioned Meena and I was frankly puzzled, dear. "Answer me" she insisted". So you have been carrying on with other girls while professing your undying love for me. And that explains your being late" finished Meena stifling the insistent tears that filled her big sparkling eyes". Jagadigh was bubbling with joy.

"And did n't you explain, brother dear" asked Kamala.

"But how could I, dear" pleaded Jagadish innocently. "I don't go about gathering threads of black hair on my coat. Do I" laughed Jagadish. Then, Kamala, I swore to her that there never was a woman in my life but her, and how much I love her. And dear, do you know what happened?"

"Well, what" repeated Kamala happily taking her thread and needle.

"She just sagged into my arms dear and said "yes Jagadish, I love you. We can be married whenever you like".

"And are n't you glad, brother?"

"What a silly queition Kamala. Why, I'm the happiest man alive" replied Jagadish as he shook Kamala playfully. "And Jagadish, it was I who put that hair on your coat. It was my idea. And that piffle worked out." The priceless piffle!

SUICIDES LTD

By A. S. RAO.

"WELL, Mr. Bhayankar, I want to die, but I can't manage the job myself. I can't blow out my brains.'

" You want to die, isn't it ?—Yes, my Company takes off all that off your hands—of course, for a consideration. Well, this isn't the place, nor is it the time, for the talk which we must have together. To-morrow at eleven-thirty, if you come over to my office I shall be happy to go into this matter thoroughly with you. An interview with me, I may observe, commits you to nothing. Until their fees have been paid our clients are safe—perfectly. But should you come, bring your cheque book with you, for I feel tolerably certain that we shall be able to convince you of our value. May I look for you at eleven-thirty ? Yes ? That's to say, of course, unless—"

Mr. Madan Paul drank off his whisky-and Soda,

"Yes," he said. "That's to say, unless—".

* * *

He was prompt to the minute of appointment.

" I see," Mr. Bhayankar said, " that you are still of a mind to be done with life, since you're here; and I gather that your supper last night at the Taj Mahal proved unavailing to overcome your resolution."

' My torments," Mr. Madan Paul pleaded, "were atrocious and hardly to be borne. However, I bore them. But I'm none the less resolved to die. I am done with it, and I rely upon you to make good the promise of your society—*The Suicides Ltd.*"

Mr. Bhayankar, like some Jenkinson of good old Goldsmith began his convincing philosophy.

" Let me tell you, my dear young man, that to the generality of mankind the knowledge that death is inevitable is sustained only by the fact that its hour is uncertain. We well know that we must die; but the time is unfixed. Take the case of a condemned murderer —he can think of nothing else but look forward to the moment of his death. It is only the fact that execution follows condemnation with speed which prevents every man who goes to the scaffold from doing so in a condition of idiocy. My limited concern recognises this truth. And so, when anyone puts himself in our hands—as you, it would seem, propose to do—and invites us to supplement for him that lack of decision which prevents him from taking his own life,—committing suicide,— we do not say to him, ' come then, and die at once,' for the result of so doing would assuredly be to drive him incontinently away. No one could face immediate death with resolution. But our policy is to say, ' Go dear Sir, about your ordinary affairs and leave it to us to choose our time. Rely only upon this, that before six months are out you'll be rid of the existence which you loathe, condemn, and execrate ! ' So, my dear Madan Paul, you have only to write out your uncrossed cheque for one thousand Rupees in favour of my company, and I'll positively guarantee that, before six months are over, you'll be put out of misery, shame, despair, horror, or whatever it is by one or other of our unequalled Corps of Assassins, of whom—' "

Mr. Bhayankar then embarked upon a tolerably long account of his personnel, its numbers and methods, its skill, its enthusiasm and its rutholessness.

* * *

Mr. Madan Paul congratulated himself on his impending success; and enthusiastically thanked Mr. Bhayankar.

" I pay him a fee," he thought, " and behold ! everything is at once taken out of my hands—and a smooth end of my life, gosha-gosh ! what civilization! Within six months—or on the other hand within six seconds—I am certain, positively certain, I shall be clearly done in ".

Mr. Paul, by now passed the "Times" offices, Victoria Terminus, and just emerged into the Ballard Estate. At that moment the near hind tyre of a motor-car, which was coming up behind Mr. Madan Paul, exploded.

Mr. Madan sprang into the air with a shriek, and collapsed in a huddled lump at the feet of some lady passing by. At least twentye econds had to go by before the discovery that a car, fifty yards away, rather than himself, was the centre of the crowd, forced him to the conclusion that he still lived, and that Mr. Bhayankar's activities on his behalf had not yet begun to manifest themselves.

He rose shakily and tottered away into the Grand Cafe near the Ballard Pier seeing stimulant. The barman hastened to serve him. The asked for brandy-and-soda was being mixed up. " How do I know," Mr. Paul thought " this blighter of a barman is n't an agent of Mr. Bhayankar. The company is said to be an extraordinary organization consisting of taxiwallahs, barmen, tailors, porters, doctors,—and —and what not ? ' With that he rose from his chair, laid a rupee coin on the bar, and followed by the barman's astonished eyes, went out hastily into the road.

So upset was Mr. Madan by what he now regarded as his escape that he ran right across the roadway, and with such precipitation that only by violently swerving did the driver of a huge omnibus avoid knocking him over or perhaps crushing him to pulp. The ghost of a driver, aghast, brought his unhandy machine abruptly to a halt, stood up, leaned forward the dashboard, and pursued Mr. Madans' frantic flying form.

Mr. Madan, careless of the public curiosity which his rapid progress was exciting, raced furiously along the pavement, while his protruding eyes

turned nimbly from side to side in search of further menaces to his security.

"Oh, my goodness!" he whispered as he ran. "Another attack! How furious was this bloke of a bus-driver at having missed me I expect Mr. Bhayankar pays them chiefly by results, and this failure means money out of tat driver's pocket. I wonder what I'd been worth to him. Fifty rupees perhaps. Perhaps more. What chance have I, with bags of rupees on my head. If I see a constable now, I'd put myself under his protection; the streets are swarming with murderers. What the devil am I running north for like this? I should go home now."

Mr. Madan now turned southwards, and began walking briskly. Suddenly he became aware of a gent advancing towards him him with a big piece of glass plate on his shoulders. Mr. Madan comprehended that this horrible villain was going to cut off his head. He uttered a loud scream, halted in his tracks, swung round, and bolted away, once more northwards.

This proceeding so astonished and indeed alarmed the glazier that he swerved in his walk, fell flat along the pavement—and the glass a spray of glittering particles. Mr. Madan heard the sound, and solemnly whispered to himself. "He tried and missed"

"Shall I ever reach my lodging alive" dominated our hero's thoughts now". Perhaps if I had my moustache removed—if I disguised myself—I can avoid Bhanyankars gang!". This thought struck him as brilliant; and off he went into the Bombay Saloon.

"Be quick," said. Mr. Madan." Clean shave and moustache off!"

The barber nipped a sheet round Madan's neck and began to get busy. The lathering process finished, the barber began to sharpen his razor.

Saep-seep!

Mr. Madan's, blood ran cold. He bounded from the chair with a yell; and flew down the street. A policeman, standing on point.duty near the station, stiffened, stared, dropped his arm, fumbled at his breast and blew a long appeal for help upon his whistle. Next moment he was in pursuit of Madan.

Mr. Madan overtook a crawling taxi. He bounded on to its step.

"Fifty-two, Brayer's Road!" he cried. "It's worth a fiver to you! Drive like the devil!" The streets flowed behind the car and Mr. Madan.

Then Mr. Madan thought," suppose this chap's an agent of Bhayankar!" To leave the car at such a speed was almost destruction, came clearly to the vision of our hero. The cab maintained its headlong speed and suddenly stopped at fifty-two, Brayers Road; and Madan got down unmolested.

* * *

Mr. Bhayankar. it's all off! I cancel my death! And am I safe now?"

Bhayankar looked at him mildly over his shell-rimmed spectacles.

"My dear Madan, dismiss all anxiety from your mind. From this moment you're a person towards whom my Company has no responsibility!

Mr. Madan jumped up.

How many suicide cases you get like this, Bhayankar; ? At least how many up-to-date?"

"None!"

"What?—all these assassins you engage—"

"They've no wages and we've no assassins!"

"Then you're a common swindler, sir!"

"Are you going to expose this? Then do it—"

"No, I don't! I'm not a fool," said Madan assuredly,

"But where's my cheque? I can stop it!"

"I've just received the money from my bank," said Mr. Bhayankar. In notes, Madan Paul. In notes"?

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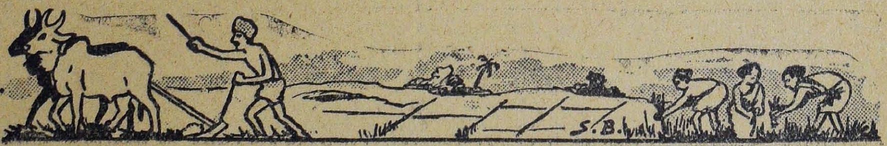
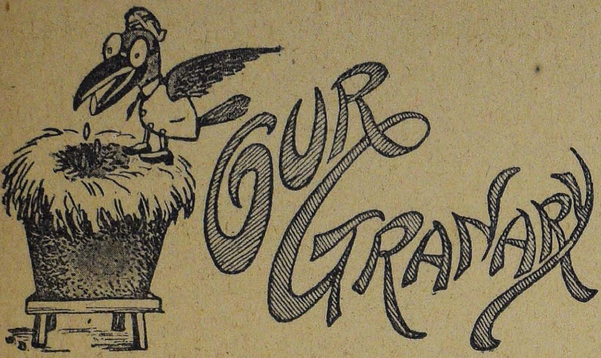




In southern Mexico stands the oldest living thing in the world—the famous cypress in the churchyard of the village of Santa Maria del Tule. The tree is situated in the intendancy of Oaxaca, two and one half leagues east of that city, and its trunk, measured four feet from the ground, has the amazing girth of nearly 130 feet. Experts, judging by the gigantic bole of the Santa Maria del Tule cypress and by the slow growth of this species, have estimated the age of this patriarch of the vegetable kingdom to be between 5,000 and 6 000 years. Thus, taking the lowest computation, when the seed from which the tree sprang fell upon the earth, King Menes was reigning in Egypt—3,000 B. C. When Cheops drove his subjects with the lash to the labour of building the Great Pyramid, it was a slender stripling of 200 years. And it had reached a lusty youth of 1,500 years when the Hebrews made their exodus from the land of the Nile. The discovery of America and the conquest of Mexico by Cortez would seem, in its life, things of only a few months ago.

* * *

It has been said: "Kill the onion and you leave a gap in the universe!" For everything else there is a substitute. The potato is akin to the cereal; cabbage and turnip and cauliflower are of the same family; beans are elongated peas; the lemon is a pessimistic orange, water melon the survivor of a cucumber, and so on. But the onion is *sui generis*, alone, unique, triumphant. It is a special creation to tempt the palate of a weary world. Man in his wisdom might have guessed everything else under the sun, but he never would have guessed an onion. Science may deduce a new star before it becomes visible, or radium before its discovery, but the onion would have gone uninvented forever had not its own insinuating yet not bashful quality forced itself into tear-brimmed eyes and upon liquescent anticipatory lips. The onion gives us the spectacle of nature turning her energy to the transmuting of mere clay into a vegetable with an artistic temperament

* * *

On festive occasions the stolid burghers of rural Bavaria amuse themselves by affecting a tall and grotesque piece of headgear in which the art of taxidermy is exploited in a fantastic fashion. The headpiece that towers highest and casts the most frightening shadow wins the prize of the day.

* * *

Emperor Nero, the prototype of insane cruelty and folly, is particulary detested for the wholesale slaughter which he perpetrated upon his next of kin. He was an accomplice of his mother in the poisoning of his adopted father, Claudius. He poisoned his adopted brother, Britannicus, and instigated the death of his mother, Agrippina, by the stiletto of a hired assassin. He next put to death his wife, Octavia, on a trumped-up charge, and poisoned his father's sister, Domitia, in order to succeed to her wealth. The same fate befell another of his maternal aunts. He slew Octavia's first husband and the first husband of his third wife, Vestinus, as well as the son of his second wife by her first husband. He ordered the death of his teacher, Seneca, and kicked his second wife, Sabina Poppea, to death, while she was about to become a mother. He sent assassins to kill his infant daughter by his concubine, Acte, and was also guilty of the violent death of the infant, Augusta, daughter of Poppea. Messalina the younger, was the third of his wives killed by his orders. His adopted sister, Antonia, the daughter of Claudius, was put to death for refusing to marry him.

* * *

According to the French Royal Academy of Science Journal of 1740, Parnella, a monk of Bescancon, had the curious facility of perspiring at will.

The muscular fibres controlling his sudoriferous glands, it was explained were in some strange way subservient to this patient's will. In the absence of any physical or mental stimulus, he could at will release the flow of perspiration on his eyelids, cheeks, forehead, and axillae.

In the paper dealing with the case, Parnella is described as physically weak and short in stature.

* * *

"Bringing Back voices from the dead"—yes, that is the latest achievement that science has made. How many of those people are alive to-day who heard Mr. Gladstone speak, and could give a faithful reproduction of the great Victorian's voice? Gramophone technicians have now achieved a seeming miracle. You will soon be able to hear speeches actually made half a century ago by famous people long since dead, and you will hear them as clearly as if they had gone to the recording studios in 1934, as do the celebrities of today.

Their voices will be re-recorded from original phonograph records made for the great Edison, the inventor of the phonograph. When they were recorded, Edison had no idea that his talking machine might have any commercial value. He merely wanted to make a collection of famous voices, and a friend of his, Colonel Gouraud, obligingly came to England to collect voices very much in the same way as we collect autographs to-day.

Among those whom he persuaded to talk into the cumbersome recording horn attached to a cylinder, were Florence Nightingale, Disraeli, Stanley, Tennyson, Browning and Barnum.

Silence ho!

The Editor Speaks!

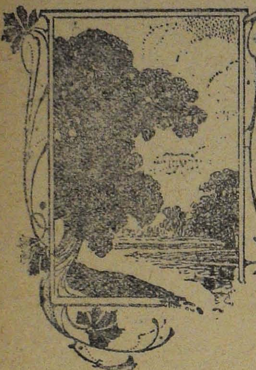
THE FUNNY MAG intends to march from strength to strength. Its readers are a legion—the FUNNY desires not only to hold them but to swell their ranks. To achieve this it has vowed to serve up only the best of literary fares to its fastidious public.

Variety is the corner - stone of popularity. One man's gall is another's honey. The new policy of the FUNNY is to make its contents as varied as it is rich. So the FUNNY henceforth will be a fortnightly feast of fact and fiction in all their forms.

Skits and sketches of hilarious humour shall dance along FUNNY'S pages side by side with gripping stories of love and romance. Thrilling true tales shall rub elbows with rousing yarns of crime and adventure. Fun and fact, thrills and frills, mirth and mystery, jokes and jingles, news and notes, views and reviews, pictures and features—these shall capture your attention and delight your heart in an ever - changing panorama of magazine magic.

Isn't it grand FUN ?

● THE FUNNY MAG. 5th October 1935.



Boomerang

BY Jack Spencer

WHEN Douglas Faber woke up at 9 in the morning on the wrong side of the bed, he knew there was evil ahead of him that very day. He straightened his limbs, made a wry face and walked into the bathroom, cursing the 'bally' world. "Something wrong somewhere" he whispered. And in fact everything was wrong with Douglas Faber-Author, Journalist and critic. Mrs. Seton's (his landlady) cooking made him sick, upset his liver. His morning paper was stale insipid. And Viola Parker was evading unnecessarily to make their engagement known public.

Dressed in light grey flannels and murmering to himself he slowly marched on amidst the busy morning crowds to his office 'The Democrat.' The office was busy as usual but the very sight of the office irritated Faber. The eternal clatter of the typewriter, the intermittent ringing of the telephone and the office boy running hither and thither with the telegrams made him laugh. Wishing a "good morning" here and receiving a "thank you" there he stepped in to the Editor's room.

"MORNING boss" greeted Faber removing his hat.

"Morning Mr. Faber," said the boss motioning him to a seat." I'm glad you dropped in, this day Mr. Faber. In fact I would have been angry if you didn't come. There's a novel waiting to be reviewed and I would much like you do it as early as possible, Mr. Faber I know you have a name as a critic and believe me the sales of a book depend on how you view it" smiled the Editor as he took out a neat and bulky volume from among a litter of recent 'arrivals," All I can tell you about it is that its title 'Love In the Desert' is intriguing and is got up quite decently. The author's name 'Javelin D'Arcy' is of course a pseudonym."

"But boss, I'm not in a mood to review anything" protested Faber feeling irritated. "Don't you think you had better..................."

"Stop your old story, Mr. Faber. It would n't do you any good. You have got to review it within a couple of days. That goes in our Sunday edition and here is the book.

Quite helpless, Faber took the book and walked out of the office into the street. He lit a cigarette and jogged along like a tramp, thinking. "Reviewing a book in a couple of days, indeed" he smiled to himself. "Well, I ll show them what it would be like." And he did.

A couple of days later the Editor of the "Democrat" was shocked to read Faber's seething review on "Love In The Desert." The Editor regretted to have to publish that review but knew full well Faber's reputation as a critic to be unquestionable. The Editor felt sure that the slightest modification in the review would make Faber fly into fury. "I must have a talk with him the next time I meet him" said the Editor to himself and he did the very evening when Faber casually walked into the Editor's room.

"I'm really sorry, Faber, but you have ruined the author's career. It's so damning."

"Can't help it, boss. The whole thing is pure piffle," replied Faber frowning. "Not worth reading."

"What of it. Mr. Faber" protested the Editor annoyed. "You could have said the same thing in quite a different way. After all it is a maiden attempt and if that poor Javelin D'Arcy were to read your review he would sooner commit suicide than attempt at another novel. I quite agree with your opinions, Mr. Faber, but you are ruthless and merciless and you'd regret it" observed the Editor. And Faber did regret it all his life for his unvarnished remarks on "Love in the Desert." After a pleasant chat with Miss Helen the pretty little typist Faber was about to leave the office when Viola with a neat bundle in her arms stepped in.

"Hullo ! Viola" greeted Faber extending his arms,

"Hullo, Faber, would you mind doing me a favour."

"Of course, my dear. You know I'd anything for you."

"I'm glad to hear that Faber. Would you mind taking me to the Editor,"

"Oh, yes, Viola, but why" asked Faber puzzled.

"You see dear, I wanted to give it to you as a surprise but my scheme has fallen. I wrote a book called 'The Love in the Desert' and......." Douglas Faber nearly gasped and would have reeled to the ground if he had not clutched at the door knob.

"Are you sick dear" enquired Viola sympathetically.

"Oh no darling. It's the heat, you know."

"Listen to me, Faber" proceeded Viola. 'And I have sent my book to be, reviewed here and a scoundrel of

(Continued on page 56)

Stabbed in the Back

P. S. SHA.

Part II.

FAINT and weak with exhaustion Mallick sat in the station lock-up his chin resting on drawn up knees when the sound of a key grating in the lock startled him to his senses. A light smell of cigarette smoke was in the air and he heard faint footsteps walking up towards him with measured paces. The next minute Rupsingh, with a cigarette dangling between his thin lips entered the cell and sat on a chair brought by constable Harisingh.

"I'm sorry for you, Mullick, but unless you explain matters clearly and throw light on this unpleasant affair, I fear you may get the noose round your neck."

Mallick shivered with fear at the cold and calculating tone of the criminologist. It unnerved him.

'I gave you all the information I can, sir," he whispered,

"Not all" corrected Rupsingh smiling at the shrinking figure before him Of course, I can get at the root of this affair even without your help, but it would save a lot of worry and time if you chose to help me along."

BUT officer, don't you understand the whole ghastly affair is as much a mystery to me as it is to you pleaded Mallick, irritated. ' Of course I do' admitted Rup pitying him. 'But I mean to unravel the mystery with your help, Mallick. Answer me a few questions and dont keep back anything from me understand ?'

'Yes, sir.'

'When exactly was it that your master told you of his journey ?'

'8-40 or so, sir,'

'Good, but how could you be so sure about it, Mallick ?'

'Er-you see, sir well I mean, I might be......'

That's no good Mallick. You know just why you are so sure about the time. Slip it.'

"I'm sorry sir. After all I might be be wrong."

"No, you are right'' corrected the criminologist eyeing him angrily. "And I'll tell you why. There is a woman who stays with you in the nights and leaves by about 8-40 in the morning to catch the local train. Who is she ?" questioned Suresh fixing a pair of steely eyes on Mullick.

Mullick who was fidgeting about nervously straightened himself and stood upon trembling legs.

'It, is a lie sir. It's a lie' he flared. "No woman has stepped into the h use for the past three years," answered Mullick in a fit of fury.

"Don't assume that tone with me Mullick," warned the criminologist calmly. "Understand that I am here to help you out of this ghastly affair and if you keep back any information from me, I repeat you get the noose round your neck. I know the woman in question, was coming to you every night for the past three years. Is she your wife or mistress ?"

Mullick collapsed into his seat with a thud. His knees knocked at each other and his brain swam. It took him a few minutes to muster up his courage and answer the stern criminologist. "I have neither wife nor mistress, sir" was the curt response.

Rupsingh took out a photograph from his breast pocket and pressed it into the nervous hands of Mullick. The photograph fell to the ground in a second as stifled gasp escaped from Mullick.

"Where did you get this sir ?" inquired Mullick quite dazed.

"Never mind where I got it" snapped the irate detective," Do you happen to know who she is."

"Why, eh she is—er—I mean......"

'Your wife' supplied Rup helpfully as he picked up the photograph from the ground.

'Yes, sir. She's my wife' confessed Mullick vainly attempting to stifle the insistent tears that trickled down his pale cheeks.

'And Mullick' began Rup 'she has been paying you nighty visits for three years and she ought to know something about this if not all' reasoned the criminologist.

'Certainly not, sir' flared up Mullick rising to his feet once again. 'You don't suspect her of............'

'I suspect nothing Mullick" answered Rup quite unmindful of the embarrassed cook. 'I only said she might know something of this affair and I don't see why you should fret and fume ?'

'Because she knows nothing of this. In fact sir, Nalini has never clapped her eyes on my boss. And to suspect that......'

'And she came to you yestertight' persisted Rup.

'No sir' protested Mullick impotently. 'It's nearly a week since she came to me.'

'Who was it, then that, came to you on the fateful night ?'

'None sir' blurted Mullick. 'I can swear to that.'

'But how could you, Mullick, when you were not on the spot. You said you left the house by half past eight.'

'None, sir, corrected Mullick.

'As you please Mullick. Now can you tell me where Nalini lives ?'

I refuse to answer' shrieked Mullick, red in the face.

'Don't lose your temper Mullick. It is unhealthy' cut in Rup smiling.

The calm and cool retort went home and broke Mullick. He collapsed into the rickety seat wringing his hands. He felt lost, helpless.

'But sir, listen to me. Nalini has nothing to do with the murder. I swear to it. Don't you understand ? Nalini is the sweetest little thing on earth and to suspect her of a cold blooded murder—it is unbelievable. She is innocent. Innocent as the babe unborn. Ever since she lost her sister ....'.

'So,' cut in Rup, 'Nalini has a sister ?'

'Can't say if she is alive or dead ?'

'How is that ?'

'I have not seen her for once, sir. And whenever I asked Nalini about her, her only answer was that 'she doesn't belong to this world.'

'It is interesting' mused Rup looking at his watch. Now, where does Nalini live ? I must have the address, Mullick and if you refuse you get into trouble.'

'5 High Street, Kalapuram.' whispered Mullick faintly.

* * *

The house was small and neat, completely surrounded by tall trees. A thin lad of about four completely nude ran up to the gate to meet Rupsingh who was taking stock of the house at a glance.

"Who lives here my lad ?" questioned Rup but the child quite surprised vanished into the house and returned a minute later accompanied by an young woman well dressed and good looking.

"Did you want to see me, sir" inquired the woman courteously tidying her sare

"If you are Mrs. Nalini, yes" replied Rup very carefully observing her knot of dark hair done up negligently. "I'm Nalini alright and may I know who you are and what you want of me'' she cooed forcing a wan smile.

"I'm Rupsingh the criminologist but you don't know me."

"The Police'' she gasped clapping her hands to her ears.

"Let me assure you madam I'm not connected with the police in any way and there is absolutely no need to worry about it. Now, I wish to talk to you a few minutes.

Mrs. Naiini stood at the threshold quite dazed. A criminologist, indeed, to come to her house to talk ! About what ? That puzzled her.

"Come in sir, this way" she said mechanically and led Rupsingh into a big room facing the street. She drew a chair for him and waited anxiously for him to speak.

'When did you meet your husband last madam ?"

"Meet my husband" she repeated angrily, 'what has that to do with you and if that is what you want, you'd better leave the house" she flared.

"Be calm lady and dont fret advised Rup. Let me tell you your husband's life is in danger. He is now under arrest on a charge of murder and with your help I mean to help him out.

"But who was murdered ?" questioned Nalini shaking liking an aspen leaf.

"His Master," answered Rup watching her critically, "Now, can you tell me when you met your husband last ?"

"A week, sir. It is a week since I saw him."

"Are you quite sure ?"

"Quite sure, sir. Ever since my sister er-er. I mean ever since my sister came to live with me—and it's a week now—I didn't see my husband.

"Did your sister ever accompany you ?"

"No."

"Why ?"

"Nalini stiffened at the question. Felt sick at having to answer a perfect stranger. And what is worse about her own sister.

"Don't keep back anything from me, Madam. Be frank" advised Rup pitying the embarrassed woman before him.

"It is only a week since she came to live with me and................"

"Where was she previous to coming here?" questioned Rup determined to worm himself into her confidence.

"Excuse me, officer, I think I had better not answer that. I assure you it is just a week since she came to live with me and has nothing to do with murders."

"Well, Madam, I should now like to talk to her personally and ascertain.

"But there is no need to" cut in Nalini helplessly when faint footsteps were heard coming down the stairs.

The next minute a tall woman, thin of frame dressed in an unrelieved write walked into the room like a ghost. Pale and dyspeptic, with sunken eyes and haggard features, her very presence sent a cold shiver run down his spine. But for the pallid features of the new comer the sisters looked so like each other that it was not possible to tell who was who. She drew a chair mechanically and stared at Rupsingh for a full minute.

I'm sorry, Madam, I had talk to you though...."

"It as alright," officer cut in the woman never taking her eyes off him. "My name is Ambika and it is a week since I was discharged from the Lunatic Asylum. I followed my sister quite unknown to her on the first night and happened to meet the one man I wanted to see for the past three years. I sneaked into the house one morning determined to kill the man who made my life a living hell but unfortunately the scoundred spotted me out."

"When was......?" began Rup surprised at the staggering revelation but stopped short when the half demented woman waived her hand imperiously.

"Hear me out, officer" snapped the woman contemptuously.

"It was then I heard the scoundrel telling Mallick that he was leaving the city and I knew just why":

"Why" interrupted the criminologist and was again snubbed for it.

"Determined to do him in, I stole into the house late in the night and to my surprise the front door was open. I stealthily went round the house but there was not a soul in there. I thought the scoundrel had already left I slipped into the kitchen, took the key on the table and went up to his room. The scoundrel was completely taken aback on seeing me. He went pale as a sheet and shook from head to foot. The cunning rascal talked about being glad to see me and that he loved me still. But I was not to be cheated again. There was the urge in me to kill him—kill him like he killed my darling son—his son. I pretended to effect a reconciliation. He followed me to the couch. I saw my chance and I stabbed him. He deserves no better fate. And officer, I have told you all. Life for life, officer" finished Ambika calmly and decidedly.

"Life for life" repeated Rup much puzzled. "That needs explaining, Madam."

"We loved each other and lived a bit too intimately, officer. And I gave birth to a boy. The scoundrel refused to acknowledge the boy and what is worse strangled my boy one night in my absence."

"Do you understand it is cold murder that you have committed and that you should answer a court of law" questioned Rup surprised at the cool indifference of the woman.

"I do and am prepared to surrender myself into the hands of police. I did the right thing and I don't fear."

Detective Inspector Benoy was busy reading his morning Mail when Rupsingh stepped into the office with a hearty "Good Morning, Mr. Benoy."

"Good-morning, ol'man. Sit down" greeted the Inspector smiling. "Like to smoke?" he asked pushing the tin of cigarettes towards Rup.

"Thanks" lisped Rup blowing a cloud of blue smoke." I believe, officer, the trial has ended.

'Why, of course, yes. And why didn't you come to the court, Rup frowned the Inspector.

"Sorry officer, busy packing" answered Rup "you see, I'm leaving for Bombay this night. An old uncle of mine is seriously ill.'

"Well, Rup p'raps it would be news to you. Ambika was let off Set at her liberty. You know these Advocate, chaps. Said something about provocation and " in self defence" And Rup it was proved that she stabbed him when her "honour was at stake."

'That's grand news, officer. Why at the very first I knew there was a woman and that ......"

"But what baffles me is how you were so'sure about Mallick's innocence" remarked Benoy as he stuffed all the letters into the drawer.

"Easy, Mr. Benoy' smiled Rup." I knew he was quite innocent when he confessed to having the other key. If he really was guilty he would never have said that! Also he doesn't chew."

"Chewing" repeated Benoy surprised. "What has chewing to do with our case?"

Why, everything" put in Rupsingh. I knew that the murderer must be a person who chews betel and wears white Roses in the head. Logically therefore it must be a woman. Further, white Roses are grown now here in the City expect in the Asylum for lunatics and hence the inference that the woman must have escaped from custody or been released recently How is that?'

"Excellent," but how did you get the woman's photograph?

'I knew there must be one and I searched for it. It was in the drawer."

(Continued from page 33)

a "Jim Brown" reviewed it and completely ruined me. It is n't fair and I want to see the Editor. Please" begged Viola leading Faber up the stairs to the Editor's room.

Douglas Faber was in a fix.

"But Viola, Editor's are busy folks and they may not........"

"He'll see me alright, dear. I've an appointment with him" persisted Viola when Miss Helen called out in her sweet voice " Mr. Brown-your hat."

Viola turned pale in a second. The bundle in her arms dropped to the ground and she was visibly shaking.

"So you are Jim Brown, you scoundrel' she shrieked and with a jerk freed herself from the weak grip of Faber and was down on the landing the next minute.

Faber lost Viola forever

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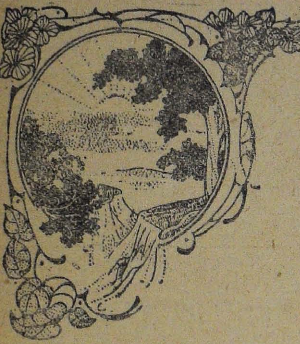

Who Could Have Believed It?

(*From the German*)

THERE lived in Vienna a young man of rank and fortune, who bore a strong resemblance to many other young men of that and every city, for he was a dupe to all the follies of fashion and high life. He combined a flexible heart with a handsome person; it had cost his mother a great deal of trouble to make him what is called a *puppy*, but, by indefatigable diligence, she had at last effected her purpose. All the ladies, consequently, loved him, and he loved them all in return. It has been said that once or twice his attachments have even been of more than a month's duration, but never did he impose any constraint upon himself or the object of his affection by an irksome fidelity. He possessed the nicest powers of perception, whenever any word or look summoned him to victory; but he always had the good manners to pay every attention to the clock, when it announced the hour of parting.

WITH these qualifications he was certain of success with the ladies. He paid his attentions to all, enjoyed all, and was at last tired of all. In one of his moments of torpid satiety our hero had returned home before supper. Our young Count threw himself upon the sofa, stretched his limbs, yawned, and so forth. Suddenly it occurred to him that he was married. No wonder that we should have forgotten it, since he himself only just now recollected it. "Apropos," said he, and rung the bell:—a servant entered.

"Go to your master's wife and ask if I may have the pleasure of seeing her." The servant listened attentively not believing the testimony of his own ears The Count repeated his orders, which the servant at length obeyed, shaking his head as he went The countess was the amiable daughter of a country gentleman—she was a flower which, from the pressure of the court atmosphere, drooped, but did not quite wither; to avoid boredom she had no resource but to swim with the tide of high life. She and her husband sometimes met—they never avoided, nor ever courted each other's society. Before marriage they had seen little of each other, and after it they had no time to devote to such an employment. There were people who spared the Count the trouble of admiring his wife's perfection and if they made no impression on his heart, they at least gratified his vanity and helped to squander his wealth.

Her husband's message was delivered to her at a moment when her mind was much the same as his: she knew not what to think of this unexpected visit: she replied, however, that she should be happy to see him. He entered—hoped he was not troublesome—took a chair—made remarks on the weather—and recounted the news of the day. The conversation was quite common, but his vivacity and Amelia's genius inspired it with interest. The time passed they knew not how: the count looked at his watch, was surprised to find it so late and requested permission to sup with his wife.

"With all my heart," replied Amelia, "If you can be content with my homely fare," Supper was brought—they ate and were merry, without being noisy. This calm pleasure possessed to them the charm of novelty; they were both pleasant without wishing to appear so, as is generally the case with most people. They were quite new acquaintances—the hours flew swiftly away, and the time for retiring to rest being arrived, the Count took leave of the Countess, highly pleased with his visit.

The next day he was invited to a concert, and did not learn till it was late, that, one of performers being ill, the concert was deferred. How was he to pass the tedious evening? He inquired, as he passed after his wife, and was informed she was somewhat indisposed.

"Well", thought he, "common civility requires that I should wait upon her, and ask her personally how she does" He sent a message, requesting that he might be allowed to sit with her till supper, and was very politely received. He was cheerful lively, and gallant. The supper hour arrived, and this time Amelia begged him to stay. He had been invited to a theatre party after the concert, notwithstanding which he remained with his wife, and their conversation was quite as pleasant, though less reserved than that of the preceding visit.

"Do you know," said Amelia, "that the party to which you were invited would find a little trouble in discovering *the cause* of your absence?" He smiled, and paused for a few moments. "I must tell you something in confidence," began he at length, while he was playing with his fork, "something which you will perhaps think rather candid than gallant; you cannot improve how much you are improved since your marriage."—"*My* marriage!" answered Amelia in a jocose tone, "I

believe it took place about the same as your own."——"very true, my lady," replied he, " but it is inconceivable how so happy an alteration can have taken place in you. At that time—pardon me—you had so much rustic bashfulness, it is scarcely possible to recognize you, your genius is no longer the same ; even your features are much improved "

" Well, my lord," replied the Countess, without wishing to return the compliment, all that you have said of me I thought of you. But upon my word," added she, " it is well that no one hears us ; for it almost seems as if we were making love." The dialogue continued long in the same style, till Amelia at length looked at her watch, and in a fascinating tone remarked that it was late. The Count arose unwillingly, slowly took his leave, and as slowly retired to the door——suddenly he again turned round.

"My lady," said he, "I find it very tedious to breakfast alone—may I be allowed to take chocolate with you?" "If you please.,' answered Amelia ; and they parted, still more pleased with each other.

The next morning it occurred to the Count that these frequent visits *to his wife* might give rise to scandalous reports. He therefore desired his valet not to mention the circumstance to any one. He then put on an elegant morning gown, and went softly over to Amelia.

Amelia had just risen in the most cheerful humour. The bloom upon her cheek rivalled the blush of morning. She was animated and witty—in short, she was enchanting ; and her husband, in an hour, discovered how much pleasanter it was to breakfast in company than to sit alone, and opposite a glass, gazing at his own person, and looking into his yawning mouth.

"Why don't you come here every day ? " said Amelia, " if my company is pleasant to you ? ' He answered that he feared his presence might prevent the visits of others.

"I shall miss no one," replied she, " as long as you indemnify me by your society." " Upon my word," said the Count, " I have more than once wished that I was not ladyships husband." " Why so ? " demanded Amelia. " That I might be allowed to tell you," returned he, " how much I love you." " Oh ! tell me so I beg," cried she, " if only for the sake of novelty." " Fear not," answered the count, "I hope my lady, I shall never so far forget myself ; but we have had, I think, two very agreeable *tete a-tetes* at supper—how about allowing me a third this evening ? " " With all my heart," answered the Countess. The appointment was on both sides exactly adhered to Their conversation this time was less lively, less brilliant—they gazed at each-other oftener, and spoke less ; the heart began to assert its influence, and even went so far, that they once, during a pause, involuntarily squeezed each other's hand across the table, although the servants were still in the room.

Who could have believed it?

Amelia very plainly perceived that it was late, but she did not look at her watch. Her husband made not the smallest effort to depart; he complained that he was somewhat tired but not sleepy. In a word, from this day they parted in the morning instead of midnight, because they were then both ready to breakfast together.

The Count enchanted with his new conquest, eloped with Amelia into the country, where they, with astonishment, discovered that the theatre of nature, and the concert of the nightingales, surpassed all other theatres and concerts They at first thought of staying only a few days—every morning they intended to depart, and every evening they changed their intentions, when autumn, however approached, they returned to Vienna. The same evening they went to the play, and our hero had the courage to sit in the same box with Amelia.

Who could have believed it ? To such a dreadful extent may a man be led by one thoughtless step. Ye happy husbands in high life, take warning by the mournful example of our Count !

(Translated By Benjamin Thompson)

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Love at Midnight

By BALASUBRAMANI.

THERE lives in the middle of Ennore upon the eastern edge of a small wood, where a steep brow of orchard pasture goes down to a little river, Mr. Sreenivasa Deshikachariar, who is a little over middle age, and possessed of all the fine qualities and accomplishments. English and Tamil literature are familiar to him. He can easily decipher such Sanskrit as has been taught in school. Besides, he is a perfect mechanical-engineer for he could write a thesis on the correct way of driving home a screw. He is a widower, by birth a gentleman, and enjoys an income sufficient to lead a princely life. He is the sole managing director and proprietor of a big automobile manufacturing and repairing company in Madras. He has for companion, an orphan nephew, whom he had brought up as his own son. Muthu, for that was the name of his nephew, having taken his degree in Arts, is now picking-up motor-engineering.

MUTHU and Mr. Chariar would spend the best part of the day together; they would stroll down to the sea in bathing costume to enjoy a frivolous bath or play many sets of extremely hard tennis in the morning and evening, or drive off to their automobile-works. After dinner Muthu would be free, as his uncle generally spent his time at cards with his few select friends.

Muthu sat on the front lawn of his uncle's bungalow caressing a little pup and waiting for a long haired girl in a lightblue saree to go past him. The girl who was living with her mother in a bungalow at the other end of the same road, usually passed that way at 10 A.M. It was five to ten which gave Muthu a few minutes to settle his inside, throw back his shoulders and put on a smiling countenance. Days passed by but the expression of hatred and contempt which the girl assumed when she saw him, never changed. Unfortunately she had the effect of making his heart jump up into his throat in a disturbing manner.

One fine morning uncle Chariar and Muthu strolled down to the beach. There they plunged into the waters, from which as usual Muthu emerged the first, and took a lonely sun-bath. He saw all around the beach batches of beautiful damsels in bathing-suits, beach-pyjamas and such other attractive-looking costumes, but they only wearied him. All on a sudden Muthu noticed amidst the crowed his long haired girl, vainly trying to start the car. He quickly reached the place and saw in the car, a middle-aged woman of charm and tact, whom Muthu took to be the girl's mother, anxiously looking at her daughter, who was trying to start the engine Muthu thought it to be the most opportune time to pick up acquaintance with the long-haired girl. He mustered up all his courage and politely began;

"Excuse me, Won't she start? Can I help you?

The girl took her foot off the self-starter and gazed at him half scornfully and half appealingly.

"She doesn't start. Can you set it right? She said.

"Let me see" Muthu replied. Helping himself with a bag of tools, he deliberately but surely attached the starter-switch and released the contact-breaker that was stuck up.

"Now try to give a gentle kick."

The Girl got in and pressed the starter. The engine started with a muffled roar, what the motor-enthusiasts refer to as a healthy 'firing.' The middle aged woman of charm and tact them remarked: "I think that was awfully clever of him, is in't it, Lalitha."

'Most assuredly rejoined the fair damsel, and turning round thanked the young man. And the mischievous cupid chuckled within at the sucess in his attack on Lalitha.

Muthu was glad that he had come to know the name of the long-haired girl. He simply gazed at the disappearing car in deep thought.

He next met Lalitha one day in the "General oil-man-stores" making huge purchases for her small family. As she was returning with a pile of packets and other articles she stumbled over a small stone in the way and let go the articles in all directions. Muthu ran up to her help picked up all the packages and escorted her outside where their cars stood bonnet by bonnet.

"Is my knee hurt? so saying Lalitha drew up her light-blue saree, as far as feminine modesty would permit, for Muthu's observation. He gazed and gazed at her shapely leg

only to pronounce after sometime, that three was not much of a damage except by way of a small scratch.

"Well then, please deposit the goods in the Car'

So they began with that simple exchange of questions and answers which the young call conversations

"You haven't finished shopping yet? By the bye what's your name?

"You never told me till now."

"Muthu, my uncle calls me My full name is Muthukrishnan."

Helping her to get into the car, he followed next. "Can't we ever get away together all-alone, Lalitha? He gently whispered. "I have got heaps of matter to discuss about. Can't we go somewhere in my car and remain together for sometime, instead of tearing away from each other every time like this?"

'My dear Muthu, how can I ever get away You know what a busy programme I have got all day along," she said diffidently.

Then filled with sudden inspiration Muthu said to Lalitha in a trembling voice

"At what time do you go to bed? Don't you get out of your window and come down to spend a couple of hours with me near the beach."

Lalitha reflected a moment, then smiled and replied with very little hesitation.

"I don't mind. Meet me a the end of the street at midnight. I would never fail except on days when it rains."

She started her car and off she went, waving her hand as she passed.

Muthu purchased half a dozen bottles of Champaign and other necessities of life for his uncle, and drove away to his bungalow.

Muthu had a very restless night, anxiously looking at the time-piece now and then for the appointed hour.

Lalitha met him at midnight. They walked along the beach, hand in hand, each musing at the romance of life. They then sat in a dilapidated fisherman's hut that was vacant.

What was it that you wanted to talk about?" Lalitha put in.

"Just to tell you what a darling you are and how I adore you," cooed Muthu.

She blushed and feeling uncomfortable to lean against the thatched wall, rested her head on his lap Gathering up all his courage Muthu bent his head in the direction of that divine mouth and gave such a lingering kiss which many a Hollywood actress will simply envy.

Three days later, when they again met at midnight, Muthu told his flame that his uncle had decided to go to Madras in his car, the next morning to attend a board meeting of the "General Motors Trade Union" and that he would be back only for dinner at night.

'Look here'' she exclaimed My mother also goes up to the city tomorrow by train. So much so, we are at perfect liberty to flirt about all day.

Muthu gave a shrill laugh at their luck

Mr. Chariar departed for Madras early in the morning. Later in the evening while he was moving about with some of his friends in the city, his car gave way, and would not budge a little. Leaving instructions with his chauffeur to get the car attended to in his works, he took the first local train to reach home. Here in the first class compartment, he found himself seated opposite to a charming woman. As he was himself a young man of fifty he realised that she was forty. When the train moved, the lady took out a thermos flask from her bag. Alas, the flask was broken and the contents oozed out. Perceiving this, Mr. Chariar with all gentleness as befits a gentleman, offered his.

"Excuse me if you don't mind, please help yourself."

'Thanks awfully" The young 'Girl, before him replied. She knew who he was and what he was worth. Mr. Chariar who had not looked at a single woman after his wife's death, continued.

"You are also going to Ennore I suppose."

"Quite so; as a matter of fact my bungalow is situated quite close to that of yours. I live with my only daughter there. My name is Padma, years ago my husband was killed in the mines."

Oh, Is that so, I never knew that all this time," rejoined Mr. Chariar assuming a very dignified appearance.

The train was dashing through at a terrible speed through the suburbs and Mr. Chariar also was rapidly coming to the point, namely that, life could be altogether different in company with the lady before him. At last when they were nearing their destination he made bold to ask her to dinner.

"I wish you dine with me one evening at "Hotel Fine love." We can have an awfully nice time there."

"Thank you Let me see.........."

She hesitated though being perfectly aware that all her evenings for the next week were blank. I think I am free the day-after to-morrow. We shall meet at half-past seven.

In the the station yard, Lalitha was waiting with the car for her mother. Mrs Padma insisted Lalitha on dropping Mr. Chariar in his bungalow. Lalitha was amazed at her mother's behaviour and was at her wit's end as to what this meant.

At midnight on the sands within the hut Lalitha was amorously resting against Muthu's shoulders. She informed him in the course of their talk that her mother and his uncle fell in, the other day in the train and had decided to dine together at "Hotel Fine love" the next evening. Muthu simply revelled at the good news. He therefore thought that it was his turn to invite his spouse to dinner.

Then Lalitha, you must dine with me to-morrow evening at quarter to eight in my uncle's baungalow."

It was a day intense activity everywhere. Mr. Chariar arrayed in the best of his costume, having ascertained from Muthu that the car was ready outside, majestically strode down the garden-path.

In a quarter of an hour, Lalitha arrived blooming in all her glory and splendour. Muthu led her by the hand to the sitting-room.

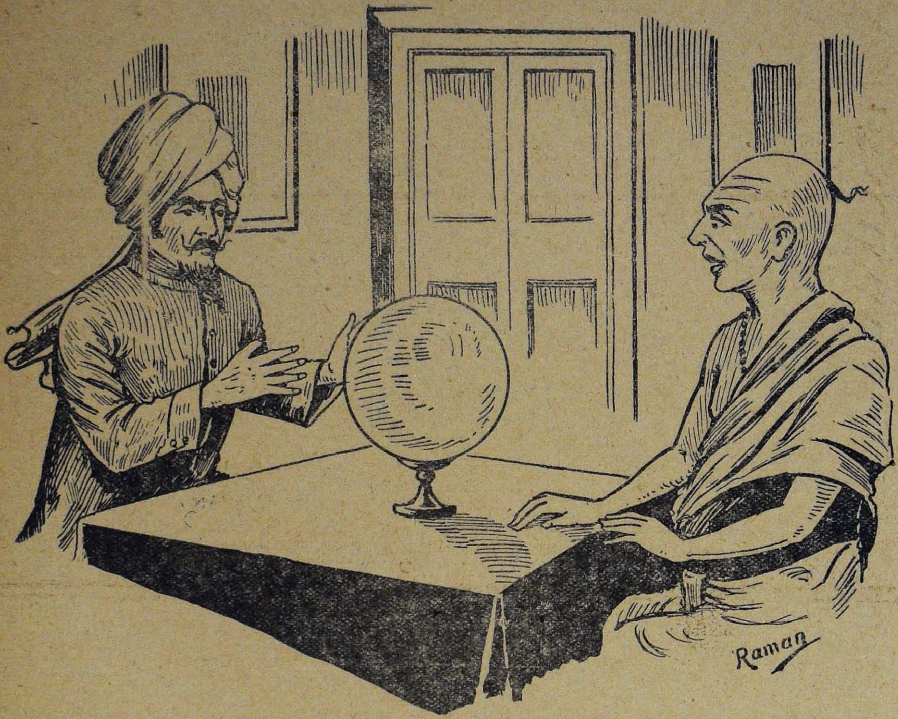
Mr. Chariar and Mrs. Padma had instinctively learnt that some revelry was going within. They both overheard what Muthu and Lalitha were talking

"Muthu, should I be the first girl you ever kissed? I forgot to ascertain that all this time," Lalitha asked him questioningly preventing him at the same time from kissing her. He hesitated a while, and then answered'

"Not exactly, Lalitha, to be frank." She them removed her hand from Muthu's mouth." Thank God," she exclaimed "I simply can't stand being practised on."

"Thank Ten thosand thanks, dearest lady!" cried Muthu joyfully. That is all I require!" and flinging his arms around her, he pressed his lips to her's in one long delicious kiss.

At this stage Mr. Chariar and Mrs Padma suddenly entered the room Their presence made the young spring to their feet in utter dismay, smitten by the sense of guilt.



The Prophecy Fulfilled

By H. AIYASAWMY.

"IS astrology a science? Do you believe in it?"

"Yes, undoubtedly," would answer Ramachandra Sastrigal, because he earns his livelihood as an astrologer.

But if you ask Subba Ayyar the same question, he will say it is all nonsense, bosh and bunkum. And perhaps you will be inclined to agree with him, if only you heard his story. So, here it goes.

* * *

"Now what is your case, Sir?" The question was addressed to Subba Ayyar.

The speaker was a man of about forty, but looking remarkably young for his years, with a pair of eyes that seemed to penetrate right through your very soul. He had a short stubby beard, that somehow did'nt quite match his face or years. A long robe of yellowish hue giving the wearer the air of of a sadhu, completed the picture. He was, as the plate indicated, none other than the great astrologer, mesmerist and clairvoyant, Professor Azad, A. A. A., A. B. C., late of Addis Ababa, New York, Berlin etc., etc. Late of, in fact, more than half a dozen cities in Europe America, and Africa.

Subba Ayyar heaved a sigh. "Alas! Sir. He was my only son. Everything had been arranged for his marriage. But suddenly, and without any warning he disappeared. Disappeared completely leaving no trace or clue behind. And I have been a miserable man ever since."

"When did this happen?" asked Azadi.

"About ten years ago, and he was only twenty".

The Professor closed his eyes in meditation. Then he took from a bureau a globular crystal, and placing it on the table, peered into it long and intensely.

A short while after, his lips began to move and he spoke in a far off distant voice, as a man in a trance. "I see

him. He returns to his parental house. His father recognises him not..."

Before Subba Aiyar could ask who was returning to whose parental roof, Azadi was his normal self. He beamed upon his client and said, "Fear not Mr. Subbier; in three weeks time your son will return to you. The crystal reveals it. But, beware how you receive him!"

* * *

Twenty days later. The evening was closing in. Lights glimmered here and there. A taxi halted in front of Subba Ayyar's house.

A young man clad in an immaculate white suit descended from the taxi. He was still wearing smoked spectacles, although it was night. The driver followed behind with two large trunks, which he deposited inside the house. On them were printed in big bold letters: "S. Ramaswami, Calcutta."

Subba Ayyar came out of his house to see what the matter was. As soon as the young man from the car saw Subba Ayyar he fairly descended upon the old man's neck and cried "Here I am father, after all these years!"

Poor Subba Ayyar blinked. He could not believe his eyes or ears. Had his son really returned to him at last? "Was the prophecy of the professor being fulfilled?" he wondered. "Or was this a dream?"

Ramaswami, to call the new arrival by his name, saw the look of doubt in Subba Ayyar's eyes. "Ah! father" he cried, "Is it for this, I have come all the way from Calcutta? To be greeted with suspicion and doubt?"

Still the look of incredulity did not vanish from Subba Ayyar's eyes.

"Perhaps" the young man went on "you wonder, where all the fat, which had earned for me the nickname of "Fatty Ramu" in the school, has gone, and the tuft of glorious hair too? Well well. There is nothing like exercise to reduce one's fat, and as for your South Indian *Kudumi*, it is as dead as dodo in North India."

The stranger's voice seemed to carry conviction. Subba Ayyar's doubts slowly vanished. Miracles do happen even in the twentieth century. Great astrologers like Professor Azadi could divine coming events, weeks ahead. No doubt about it. And he remembered the astrologer's warning in the nick of time.

He smiled and apologised: His return, he said seemed too true to be believed.

Supper over he took his on round of the house showing him the riches he had amassed, before father and son retired to rest.

Morning. Subba Aiyar woke up, and called for his son. No reply. He looked at the bed nearly. It was empty. Ramaswami was nowhere to be seen.

Subba Ayyar searched for him throughout the house. Not a trace. Panic seized him. He ran to the room where he kept his money and other valuables. The contents were gone. The open safe seemed to mock at him.

His feet stumbled against one of the boxes lying in the verandah. Hurriedly he opened the box. The first thing his hand encountered was a bundle of books. Subba Ayyar stood transfixed. The truth dawned upon him. He had been duped.

The title of the books was "My system of Prophecies and their fulfilment, by Professor Azadi, A A.A., A B.C. late of New York, Berlin, Adis Ababa, etc., etc. Astrologer, Mesmerist and Clairvoyant!

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MY DOG

BY **M. G. Rajagopalan.**

THE daily life of a family pet, a dog, is very carefully ordered and no doubt it will surprise a good many people. A family dog is quite different from a racing dog. So the privilege shared by most dogs............... of being a household pet and a friend of the family .... does not apply to racing dogs They are so to speak, in business. They have a good time, and enjoy it, but you don't see father throwing sticks into the Serpentine for them on a Saturday afternoon.

I have a dog to give away.

I don't mean that I am going to give him away, or even to sell him, but I intend to give away his character. This is an age for candour about the intelligence of our friends. Let us for once be candid about the intelligence of a dog.

Mind you, I didn't buy this dog. Somebody thrust it on me, and I am now in a bit of a mess. This little microbe, originally belonged to Dr. M. A. N. Acharya, this thing did, and as he was transferred to Bangalore, he having nothing besides, presented me with this poor, weeny, teeny, darling dog as a remembrance of our friendship during his stay with me.

MY dog is a fool. Excessive friendliness is what you would mark most on meeting him but I have had friendly dogs before It is difficult to describe without seeming to exaggerate the friendliness of this particular dog.

Once (and never again) I took him on a lead into the Bazzar Street during those evening hours when ladies mostly shop. He appeared to know them all, and in fact he did know a great many. I believe he has more human acquaintances (not to speak of others) than any dog with the area of a mile. Lovely figure after lovely figure stooped to greet him, pat him and say, 'Hullo, Puppy, how are you?'

On every occasion he propped his front paws on their silk sarees and gazed up wistfully into their eyes. Many of these lovely figures I did not know myself. When they had finished patting him they regarded me, at the further end of the chain, with a cold distant stare and passed on.

Every one of them imagined what my dog was especially delighted to see her ....the most ridiculous delusion in the world. Silk sarees are his hobby. He does not care about rose ones. He will prop himself up by his front paws against any light silk and wait there to be fondled. Children affect him in the same manner, and about 27½ percent of men. But with men you can never say. For instance ,he always runs affectionately to the police constable to be fondled when he is walking up the road, but he barks at him when he is walking down the road.

He never fails to run blithely and perkily up to the largest dogs he may meet, however menacing their appearance and seldom misses motor-cars by more than a hair's breadth if he happens to be crossing the road on some futile and improfitable trail. He will spend half a morning hunting for rabbits, but with far more pleasure he will spend a whole morning in hunting squirrels from tree to tree and wall to wall. On one occasion a squirrel, executing a difficult traverse, fell on to his nose, which frightened him so much that he ran away. He barks fiercely at cats when they are on walls, but does not notice then on the ground.

He is not refined; the niceties of life mean little to him. His pedigree is considerably larger than he is, and for generation back his sires had worn the bluest of ribbons .... and he is not one of 'Nature's gentlemen, nor he has acquired polish.' This blemish upon his character is perhaps most marked in his table manners.

He always eats with vigour, with gurgling, with threatened suffocation, and if the food happens to be soft, he operates himself in a halo of fine spray.

As he dines his legs are planted well apart, while at moments his hind ones are actually lifted bodily from the ground, and at others they claw for leverage. His whiskers writhe and he growls in a muffled manner during all his eating.

He eats almost anything, in unlimited quantities. He will imbibe milk until his silken stomach produce a ringing, drum-like note if patted. He eats in haste, without thought, and without shame. He practises the lowest deceptions in order to eats........... once having been severely burned in an effort to steal steaming fragments, in my neighbour's house, from the copper vessel in which sheep meat was stowed for his dogs.

As a general rule, the more certain he was that he was not supposed to eat something, the better he liked it.

In short, the dog is mad. I do not mean dangerously mad, but just an imbecile; and he has the cunning which often goes with arrested development. For instance, 'we' will not allow him to jump up on the sofa. You can throw a tennis-ball .... one of his favourite toys .... on to the sofa while we are in the room and he will give no sign that he has noticed it. But if we leave the room he has jumped up and seized it in the twinkling of an eye.

Once he was bored with a neighbour.

"I suppose you allow him to lie on the drawing-room sofa?"

"Of course not"

"He insisted on doing it in our house."

"He would, when we are away."

"I thought you allow him into kitchen."

"Never! There is my mother and father. They are orthodox. He fears

(Continued on page 45.)

Mohan Wants to Die.

The telephone bell rang.

At that time, I and my silly girl, Sakku, put our heads together and were busily engaged in solving the Commonsense Cross-word Competition No. 21 of the Illustrated Weekly of India. We were thinking of the solution for a down clue but it was of no avail. At last, as our heads were put together, we had to kiss each other as consolation.

The telephone bell rang once more.

'Who is that bloke ?' I cried to myself and arrived at the receiver.

'Hullo,' said I.

'Hullo.'

'Who are you ?'

'Who are you ?'

'It is me.'

'It is also me.'

'Your name, please.'

'People call me Mohan.'

'Oh ! Silly Mohan ! What do you want ? Everything going on well ?'

'You please go over here without a moment's hesitation, I am determined to die.'

'Determined to die ?'

'Yes. No more to talk. Come soon.

I called for him again and again but my efforts were futile. 'Why should Mohan die? Anything wrong with his poetic brain ?' Those were the only questions in which I was engrossed deeply. I informed Sakku about my friend's unexpectable journey to the land from whose path no traveller hath returned, and hastened to Triplicane on my fifteen-year-old Japan bicycle whose only defects were breaks and bell.

When I arrived at Mohan's room, the door was kept ajar. He sat on an arm-chair whose arm was recently broken; with an air of speculating-something-serious. As soon as I entered the room, I burst out, "Why do you die ?"

" Do not bawl out, " he warned me.

" Come on with your yarn," said I.

" Which is the best and the easiest way to die ?

" Have you become a lunatic ?"

" No, my dear Rao. For God's sake give me a fair counsel in this matter. Does potassium cyanide do well ? I think sulphuric acid is of no use and nitric acid is too hot. What am I to do ?"

" You want to commit suicide ?"

" Yes, my dear Nageswar. Won't the mixture of oil and opium do well?

" What is the reason for you to commit suicide ?"

" I will tell you. Wait on. Do you know my most precious thing ? '

" What is it ?

" Guess it."

" GULAB JAN."

" No."

" Your ten-year-old silk suit ?"

" Damn it."

" Then, I confess that am incapable of guessing your most precious thing."

" Did you ever hear the name Padma ?

" Oh ! Your girl, you mean ?"

" Yes."

" Is she ill ? I met her yesterday at the 'Roxy'. She was quite O. K. What is the matter ?"

" You know I love her."

" Yes. I know."

" I love her more than the extemely delicious Mysore Pak.

" Yes. I know all that. What is the matter, silly fellow ?"

" Two hours back she wrote me a letter."

" Yes."

" Here is the letter. See."

Mohan showed me the following letter.

Mr. Mohan,

I can't love you anymore. I am disgusted with you. Excuse me' Hereafter, do not write any letters to me

(Sd.) Padmavati.

I read the letter and thought for a moment or two Somehow or other, I wanted to show him the funny side of things.

" Alright. Past is past. Seek for a new girl."

" I won't seek for a new girl."

" Then, observe strict bachelorhood."

" No, Nageswar. I wish to die.'

" Are you serious ?

" Yes. Tell me how to go to the other world."

" Yesterday evening you told me that you will go to the 'Gaiety' for to-day's matinee show."

" But things have changed. Yesterday evening Padma promised to follow me to the 'Gaiety !"

" Oh ! I really sympathise with you. Did you buy tickets ?"

" Yes."

" You are determined to die. Is it not ?

" The soonest way to go to the other world is......... See that electric plug. Do you understand ?'

" Yes, yes, my dear chum. Very many thanks. Your ingenious brain is really a marvellous one."

"When you are so determined to die why do you waste those two tickets?"

"What am I to do with them? I think that there can't be any theatres of this sort in the heaven to which I go in a few minutes."

"No theatres in the heaven, Mohan, Milton never spoke of them," said I exhibiting my literary talents.

"Shall I burn those useless tickets?"

"No. Give them to me. Anyhow, you die in a few minutes. You bought those two tickets, one for youand the other for Padma. Absolutely there is no distinction between you and me because we are inexpressibly affectionate.

I advise you to die because you are so staunch in your determination, After your death, I go to Padma take her to the 'Gaiety,' and allow her to have the last opportunity of seeing pictures with your money. Not a bad plan, I think."

Mohan became furious. He stared at me like a lunatic, His actions were almost beastly.

"What?" he thundered like a ferocious wild animal.

"What?" I repeated rather smoothly.

"Is this the way in which you want to wreak vengeance with your friend's girl-friend who is the sole cause of your friend's death? You want to sit by the side of my charming Padma in the picture palace? If you behave so awkwardly, I won't die now.

I shuddered into a convulsive laughter, and within a few seconds Padma entered the room.

'Don't think of dying my love' she cooed patting Mohan on the cheeks.

"After all, this is my birthday joke,' pleaded Padma.

(Continued from page 43)

even to go near the kitchen door."

"Why!"

"Because they hit him with whatever they have in their hand if he does

"So they are the right people in my view to manage such awful dogs.'

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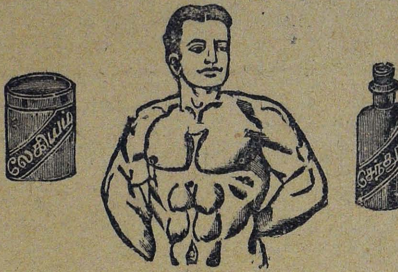

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